



RSPCA IN DOG DUMPING PLEA

Report by Sue Austin

THE RSPCA is appealing for information after a specialist animal charity warned a "sinister pattern" is emerging of lurcher dogs being dumped on the A5 around Oswestry.

Two dogs have died in two weeks with a third rescued from the busy Gobowen roundabout on the Oswestry bypass.

Hector's Greyhound Rescue charity, which is based in Gobowen, says the A5 has become a dumping ground for the dogs. Lurchers are often used for hare coursing and night-time "lampping" for rabbits.

Hayley Bradley from the rescue charity said two dogs were dumped on the roundabout 10 days ago. One died when it was hit by traffic. "The other was rescued by a motorist and is now in the local authority dog pound to see if its owner will come forward," she said.

The latest incident follows the death of a lurcher at the Shotatton crossroads near Oswestry the previous week and the successful search for a dog abandoned near the Mile End roundabout over Christmas. Hayley said: "People must know what is going on, there is a sinister pattern emerging here of dogs being abandoned."



Miles with foster carer Graham Jones

Council's bus station plans to be scrutinised

PROPOSALS have been unveiled for a new bus station for Welshpool.

Welshpool Town Council has put forward three possible plans for a new bus station in the town in the next financial year.

The transport plans were due to be discussed last night (Wednesday) at a full council meeting.

They include a bus station located on the Berriew Street car park, behind the public toilets.

A report says access for pedestrians is an advantage.

However, it also says traffic management could be a problem.

Another suggestion is for a scheme to be developed in the Church Street car park to provide a bus station and taxi bays in the small existing car park.

And another idea is for an alternative scheme in Church Street in the larger car park area.

However the recommendation going before the council pushes for the Berriew Street plan to be given the go-ahead by town councillors.

Terrified

"These dogs are terrified and they have just been thrown out onto a busy road, probably in the dark. They will just run and run. I am worried there will be a serious accident."

The dog rescued after being abandoned over Christmas is doing well, Hayley said. The dog, a whippet cross saluki, was injured when it was hit by a police vehicle attending an emergency call.

Scores of people helped look for him and he was eventually found at Mile End services. Now christened Miles, he is with foster parents Graham and Andrea Jones recovering from his injuries.

A spokesman for the RSPCA urged anyone with information about the dumping of the lurchers to contact the charity.

He said: "We rescue thousands of animals every year who have been cruelly abandoned - often left by the side of the road or even thrown out of windows of moving cars."

"We have also had dogs coming into our care with awful injuries consistent with being used in badger baiting or hare coursing. The RSPCA works closely with other agencies to tackle these awful blood sports and would urge anyone who is concerned that this illegal activity is taking place near them to report it to our 24-hour cruelty line."

"Anyone who finds an abandoned dog or who has concerns for the welfare of a dog should also report their concerns via the emergency number 0300 1234."

Little Savannah leads the way



Graeme and Christie Kros with their daughter, Savannah. Photo: Alan Evans.

SAVANNAH sleeps soundly, unaware of the importance of her birth for mothers in the Oswestry area.

The little girl was the first baby to be born at Oswestry's midwife-led unit since it re-opened at the turn of the year.

Her parents Christie and Graeme Kros from Ellesmere are urging others to chose the unit, based at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital, for either labour or recuperation.

"We were so grateful to be able to have Savannah in Oswestry," Christie said.

"The unit is so relaxing, it is not like a hospital at

all and staying in for three days made us comfortable about taking Savannah home when the time came."

Health campaigners are fighting plans which could see the birthing service lost at the unit. They are urging parents to use the unit.

The unit was closed for six months last year because of staffing shortages. Staffing problems struck again at the weekend. The unit was temporarily closed overnight on Friday night and Sunday night because of staff sickness.

Health bosses apologised for any inconvenience caused.

HEALTH

MP in spinal unit after sustaining injuries in horse fall

OSWESTRY'S MP Owen Paterson has suffered severe back injuries after an accident while horse riding.

Mr Paterson is being treated in the Midlands Centre for Spinal Injuries at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital after his horse fell while he was riding at the weekend. Speaking from his hospital bed in the internationally renowned unit, the Conservative MP for North Shropshire stressed he was still working and would continue his constituency and other work through emails and contact with his office.

An accomplished rider, the MP said it was ironic that he was now a patient in the unit that he and wife, Rose, raised £60,000 for by completing the toughest horse race in the world, the Mongol Derby.

His horse fell while he was riding on Saturday and, after initially going to the accident and emergency department at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, he was transferred to the specialist spinal unit when it was discovered that he had broken three vertebrae. "Apparently I was very lucky not to have suffered more serious injury," he said. "I have been told that I have to have complete bed rest, so I will not be going to London, at least for this week. But I am constantly in touch with the office."

● Praises - See Page 2

CAMPAIGN

Chef Oliver backs energy drinks move

CELEBRITY chef Jamie Oliver has thrown his weight behind a village campaign to ban the sale of energy drinks to under 16s.

St Martins, near Oswestry, has gone energy drink free for under 16s, after Stans Superstore and St Martins Garage both agreed to refuse to sell the drinks to schoolchildren.

Jamie Oliver's foundation has backed the move and called for it to be taken in front of the Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt.

● Village - See Page 15

INSIDE

School's show will be a beauty



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WAT'S MEADOW

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Injured MP praises the care at specialist spinal centre

Report by Sue Austin

OSWESTRY'S MP Owen Paterson has praised the care he is receiving at the town's orthopaedic hospital after he was taken there for treatment after a horse riding accident.

Mr Paterson suffered severe back injuries in the accident at the weekend. The MP is being treated in the Midlands Centre for Spinal Injuries at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital.

An accomplished rider, the MP said it was ironic that he was now a patient in the unit that he and wife, Rose, raised £60,000 for by completing the toughest horse race in the world, the Mongol Derby.

His horse fell while he was riding on Saturday and, after initially going to the accident and emergency department at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, he was transferred to the specialist spinal unit when it was discovered that he had broken three vertebrae. He said: "I was so relieved to be in this incredible, world class unit at the orthopaedic hospital in Gobowen. The staff are exceptionally professional, exceedingly caring and have a huge amount of expertise." Mr Paterson said he had connections with the orthopaedic hospital before he became the area's MP.

He said: "I was on the board of the Institute of Orthopaedics and chaired the committee which saw the Leopold Muller Arthritis Research Centre built at the hospital. My wife, Rose and I raised £60,000 for this very unit when we took part in the Mongol Derby in 2011.

"Even more ironically it is the toughest horse race in the world, 14 hours a day of hard riding for nine days on 25 different and very difficult horses. Fellow riders broke ribs, shoulders and other bones in falls during the race. Rose and I always said we were so lucky to complete it unscathed. We raised £60,000 for the Midlands Centre for Spinal Injuries and £60,000 for the Royal Irish Regiment Benevolent Fund by completing the challenge. Now I am getting to see, from a view I never thought I would, how amazing this centre is."

Wonders of Lego in spotlight at library event



Rob Spinks from Bricks and Tricks with youngsters at the Lego workshop at Oswestry Library. Photo: Alan Evans.

YOUNGSTERS were given an insight into the wonderful world of Lego at a recent event at Oswestry Library.

A hands-on workshop was held at the library in Arthur Street, with Rob Spinks from Bricks and Tricks at the venue to help children with their creations.

The workshop is one of a host of events organised by the library on a regular basis.

The library offers much more than just books and regularly hosts events for people of all ages.

Among the many organisations which meet at the library on a regular basis is Oswestry Family and Local History Group.

Oswestry family and local history volunteers run a twice-weekly advice service at the library.

Other workshops include computer lessons, knitting advice and creative writing sessions. A confident communication workshop will be held on Saturday.

The workshop is aimed at allowing people to overcome their fear of speaking in public.

Keep up to date about the events and activities through Facebook Oswestry Library and twitter @oswestrylibrary.

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Plaid chief Leanne to come for a meeting

PLAID Cymru leader Leanne Wood is due to be in Mid Wales today (Thursday) to engage with local supporters and party members.

Ms Wood will meet with Powys County Councillor Elwyn Vaughan and a host of others in Welshpool.

The meeting will take place at the Royal Oak Hotel in the town today.

The leader will speak at a public meeting to outline what she has described as the radical changes that are needed in Wales.

The politician said she was keen to hear about people's aspirations for the area.

Ms Wood said: "I want people throughout Wales to consider how we can lift up our country by taking responsibility for our own affairs and our own lives, and on how we can start a debate in Wales about ending our dependence on others."

"I have analysed the challenges facing our country: challenges from within the UK, challenges that following the Brexit vote, not least the risk an extreme Tory Brexit poses to Welsh jobs and services, as well as the challenges we face from global developments."

"Decisions about Wales should be made in Wales."

"Self-determination means that we should choose which powers we want to share with other countries or with Europe."

Ghost hunting around old castle

THERE will be some spooky goings-on when a castle opens its doors for a paranormal evening.

Bill Tabone, founder of the Australian Paranormal Society, will be back at Whittington Castle on May 12 to search for strange activity.

The evening runs from 9pm to 2am. Go to paranormalfriends.co.uk for tickets.

Students score above national GCSE average

Report by Dominic Robertson

STUDENTS in Shropshire scored above the national average for GCSE results, new figures have revealed.

But some schools across the county are falling behind in a measure of the progress made by pupils through their life in secondary school.

The results again reflect changes made to the way GCSEs are recorded.

For the first time this year, the data includes English and maths GCSE results awarded under the new 9-1 grading system.

The figures show a large difference between schools across both Shropshire and Telford council areas but the overall Progress 8 figure – which measures how much improvement pupils have made between the end of Key Stage 2 (primary school) and Key Stage 4 (GCSEs) – is below average for both areas.

The Shropshire Council area had an overall Progress 8 score of -0.1 per cent, slightly below the English state-funded school average of -0.03 per cent. In the Telford & Wrekin area Progress 8 came out at -0.12.

However, overall Attainment 8 figures, which measure how well pupils have performed in eight qualifications including English and maths, were 46.4 for both authority areas, above the national state funded school average of 46.3. Among the figures is the percentage of pupils achieving grade five or above in both GCSE English and maths.

For the Marches School in Oswestry that figure was 45 per cent, for Moreton Hall Girls School it was 65 per cent, for Oswestry School that figure was 17 per cent and for St Martins School that figure was 10 per cent.

Nick Bardsley, Shropshire Council's Cabinet member for children's services and education, said: "These results are a testament to the hard work and effort that students have put into their studies and we congratulate them on their achievements."

"It is also important to recognise the support that our school communities in Shropshire have given to the students."

Lib Dem leader fields questions



Liberal Democrat leader Sir Vince Cable at Welshpool Town Hall for a question and answer session with Jane Dodds, the Welsh Liberal Democrat leader

A PACKED town hall quizzed Liberal Democrat leader Sir Vince Cable on the NHS, the future of the party and – without much prompting – Brexit.

The 74-year-old was the guest of honour at Welshpool Town Hall on Saturday afternoon, the first in a series of question and answer sessions organised by the Welsh Lib Dems.

Members of the public got a glimpse of life in the coalition, and managed to learn a little about what

Mr Cable thinks of his main political rivals.

But the point of the meeting, he said, was to get back to basics – speaking with residents about the issues they face, and what the Lib Dems could do to help. "We didn't know who was going to be here," he said. "We expected a fair number of 'antis', but obviously we have a lot of supporters in Welshpool."

"Westminster is a bubble. It's where all the politicians, lobbyists

and media are, and it is a bit of an echo chamber. Actually getting out and meeting a wide variety of people, many of whom are struggling at the minute, is a very important part of my job."

"It's only a matter of time before we come back in Montgomeryshire. It was a Lib Dem stronghold – we will be back." Mr Cable started his speech on Brexit, and it was a theme that continued throughout the hour-long Q&A.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Seven-mile walk for the ramblers

THE Welshpool Ramblers' walk on Sunday will be led by Nicola Stone and will be from Oswestry.

The moderate seven-mile route will utilise sections of Oswald's Trail and pass through the parklands of Llanforda and Brogyntyn before returning to Oswestry at Gatacre Park via Pentre Pant Hall and across fields.

All are welcome but no dogs on the walk. Meet at 9.30am in the car park beside the Welshpool Tourist Information Centre (OS grid ref. SJ 226075) or at the start of the walk in the north corner of the car park adjacent to English Walls (OS grid ref. SJ 291295) ready for a 10.15am start.

Awareness event will take place

A COFFEE morning and awareness event to mark World Cancer Day will take place this weekend.

The event will take place in the Corn Exchange in Welshpool on Saturday.

It will take place from 9.30am until midday.

A number of local and national cancer-related charities will be present including Marie Curie, Severn Hospice, Lingen Davies and Inspire Welshpool.

Actress Ruth to talk about book

ACTRESS, writer and comedy star Ruth Jones will be coming to Oswestry to talk about her debut novel.

The Gavin & Stacey star, who played Nessa in the smash comedy series also starring James Corden, will be giving a talk organised by Booka Bookshop.

Carrie Morris, from Booka, said: "Join us for an evening with actress and screenwriter Ruth Jones as she talks about her debut novel, Never Greener, a heart-rending, provocative and astutely written love story about getting what you want and losing everything you need."

The event will be held on April 12 at 7.30pm at The Wynnstey Hotel in Church Street. Tickets are £15 and can be bought from Booka.

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Emily Williams

Book puts spotlight on horse centre

A NOVELIST who grew up in North Shropshire has written a book based on a horse centre. Emily Williams has written the young adult novel entitled Rafferty Lincoln Loves, which is set to be released by Lutino Publications on February 14, and has been written especially for the British Thoroughbred Retraining Centre, which has supported the project.

Emily said the centre loved the story, which focuses around her experiences in North Shropshire, and was written after she suffered injuries in a riding accident.

She said: "The story is based in the Midlands around the canals of northern Shropshire. I used inspiration from an area I grew up in and loved around Gobowen and St Martins to give the setting. I have fond memories of the high school at Rhyn Park and the English teachers that

inspired my writing aspirations." The novel follows the story of four teenagers, and Rafferty Lincoln who doesn't like horses, but when the girl of his dreams pulls him into a world of lead ropes and horse brushes he takes a shine to a missing race horse.

Committees are scrapped by council to save £175k

Report by Jonny Drury

A COUNCIL decision to axe committees that represent three different areas will save £175,000.

Powys County Council voted to scrap its Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Brecknockshire committees by 34 votes to 22. Councillor Matthew Dorrance had initially proposed a recommendation that the shire committees should retain their current functions – meaning meetings would be held quarterly with extra meetings available in cases of urgency. But Councillor Elwyn Vaughan proposed an amendment, that the shire committees should stop from the council's annual meeting, to cut costs and to allow members to work in their own areas.

Care home has closed its doors

A CARE home at which the owner stole from a resident's bank account has closed. Cherie Reynolds, 49, who ran the Ash Grove care home in St Martins near Oswestry, admitted stealing £3,850 when she made a recent appearance at Shrewsbury Crown Court. Reynolds admitted making eight cash withdrawals of between £100 and £300 from a resident's account. She will appear for sentencing at a future date. It has now been revealed that Ash Grove in Church Lane is no longer run as a care home. Fran Jones, Shropshire Council's contracts officer, said: "The home manager made a decision to close the home in 2017. "The two residents were supported by Shropshire Council to find alternative care arrangements."

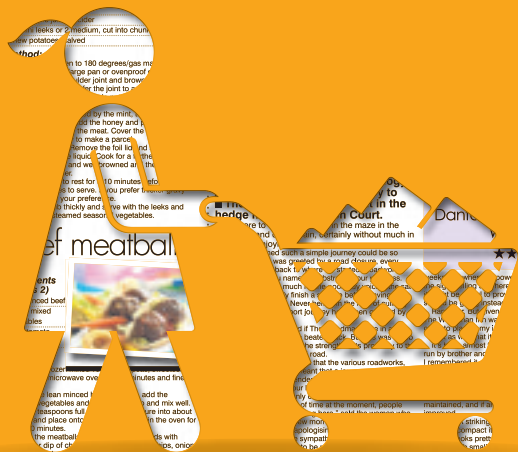
It was seconded by councillor Phyl Davies, who said he would rather the £175,000 be spent on youth services or other areas. He said: "We are Powys County Council and we should be having our debates as a unitary authority." The current chair of the Montgomeryshire committee is Newtown County Councillor Joy Jones. Welshpool County Councillor Graham Breeze is her deputy. She met the decision with sadness and said the value of the committees was to get local information that will be lost in the full council. She said: "The police and health services have been able to come along and make sure that councillors from Montgomeryshire are up to speed on issues and problems that are going on in their local towns and areas. So with a little sadness to see the end of this committee, I feel very privileged to be the last chair of the Montgomeryshire committee and will continue in my role until the annual meeting in May."

Fascinating finds for Chris



Metal detectorist Chris Langston with the Elizabethan sixpence he found FASCINATING finds have been unearthed in the soils of Shropshire. Metal detectorist Chris Langston has had two rare finds, proving that there is plenty of history under our feet. Mr Langston, who runs the Oswestry Unearthed company, says he found an Elizabeth I, 1585 AD, silver hammered sixpence while metal detecting in fields around Oswestry. "This lovely find is in remarkable condition albeit almost snapped in half probably by a modern plough," he said. And he came across an 1850 Queen Victoria sixpence that had been counter stamped showing that it had travelled to South America. He said: "Post-independent Costa Rica, from 1839-1857, whilst under the reale/escudo system saw shortages of coin and foreign coins."

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Futuristic view of town revealed by civic society

Report by Sue Austin

A FUTURISTIC view of Oswestry has been revealed by the town's civic society.

New eco-villages, a country park around its ancient hillfort and driverless electric vehicles are all part of the plan.

Oswestry's growth shouldn't be field-by-field with faceless housing estates but planned many years in advance, according to Oswestry and District Civic Society. Society members are urging Shropshire Council to look at the bigger picture when planning.

Bright move is backed by council

A BID for Oswestry to become a "solar town" has been backed by councillors.

The move could see town council buildings, schools, colleges and leisure centres join forces to install solar panels to provide green energy.

At the council's amenities committee meeting councillors agreed to bid for national funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund to pay for a feasibility study into the idea.

The move was first mooted by Councillor Mike Ishwerwood.

Councillors were told that in its simplest form the community energy scheme invests in infrastructure – solar panels – generally on public buildings.

The panels generate power which is used by the building occupants with any excess sold on to the National Grid. The meeting heard that before any decision is taken public drop-in sessions would have to take place to assess the level of support for a community energy scheme for Oswestry.

Councillor Ishwerwood said he was pleased at the council's decision. Speaking before the meeting he said: "Renewable energy schemes, mainly in the form of roof-top solar, are being established up and down the country."

At a meeting in the town, society chairman Saffron Rainey said the group wanted to spark a discussion and encourage Shropshire Council to take a longer term view of the area. Mr Rainey said Shropshire Council saw the A5 corridor in the west of the county – between the town and Gobowen – as a focus for growth.

He said: "In 15 years Oswestry's population will be 24,000, Gobowen, 3,750. By 2050 the whole community will be between 34,000 and 35,000. With 15-year plans, development happens field-by-field with no idea of the big picture. If the town grows only by disjointed housing estates they will have no social facilities, poor or non-existent public transport. They will be far from shops and they won't fit with the low carbon life we must begin to lead."

The society says growth could be far more effective in making Oswestry a successful and thriving town. Mr Rainey said: "Housing and major employers, particularly the orthopaedic hospital, could be effectively linked by good public transport. All parts of Oswestry could have good access to the main railway and a strong case could be made for improvements to the A5 to reduce congestion around the town."

"Growing Oswestry in two new villages, and some southward growth of Gobowen – this is a way we can foster communities rather than faceless estates. The first village would be Parkhall, capitalising on its existing sports, social and employment. The second would be at Middleton, capitalising on its position between the main employment sites proposed by Shropshire Council. We could make them 'eco' villages, based on solar power, clever drainage, cycling and electric cars."

Contest call for sculpture ideas



Clive Knowles, right, with Peter Humber and some of the unwanted equipment donated by Shrewsbury and Telford hospitals that will be turned into a sculpture

A SCULPTURE to mark the 70th year of the National Health Service is being created using obsolete hospital equipment.

The piece of art will be made in a partnership between Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust and the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry, which will create the piece free of charge.

A competition to design the structure has been launched with both organisations calling on the public to get involved.

Pieces of equipment that can no longer be used or repaired include old blood pressure monitors, parts of hospital beds, microscopes, a broken dialysis machine and wheelchairs. Artist Luke Kite will turn the

winning design into a reality. The hospital trust is holding an NHS 70 Charity Fun Day on July 7 at the Shropshire Education Centre at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital when the sculpture will be revealed.

Clive Knowles, from the centre, said: "We are delighted to be working with SaTH to create a stunning sculpture to mark the 70th anniversary of the NHS."

"We want to create something that stands the test of time and reflects the kind, caring and hard-working people who work in the organisation throughout Shropshire."

People with designs can submit their ideas via www.sath.nhs.uk/nhs70 by February 16.

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BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

One late councillor that I knew well would turn in her grave if she learned of last week's decision to scrap the shire committee system on Powys County Council – but this is just the first of some difficult decisions the authority will have to make.

The late Councillor Anne Holloway was fiercely proud of the Montgomeryshire Committee which was retained during local government reorganisation in 1996. She would have fought to the end against last week's motion to end the system and bank £170,000 in savings from ending the meetings at Welshpool, Brecon and Llandrindod. As Miss Holloway's Welshpool successor on Powys County Council I was obliged to vote against the proposal – and could feel her watching from above – but deep down I knew this was a tradition doomed for the bin which is now home to so many historic democratic processes. The meetings currently give Montgomeryshire councillors the opportunities to consider local issues, the sort that are often swallowed up and forgotten on the bigger Powys stage. And there are also powers to make decisions on local high-ways issues where local knowledge is the all-important factor.

So the meetings in March and May will be the last in Welshpool which fits nicely into place for the ongoing investigation into the future of Powys County Council buildings in the north of the county with the Severn Street chamber being no longer needed.

The cynics in our midst might just think that's more than a coincidence and they may just be right. But the truth of the matter is that unless the council is completely transformed it is heading for disaster – and that transformation is not going to be popular with anyone.

The problem for the ruling Independent Group and Conservative alliance at County Hall is that their plans may be delayed by political posturing from Labour, Liberal Democrats and Plaid parties and that could prove very damaging for us all.

Huge changes to town and community councils are getting closer with many set to merge and more powers certain to be delegated to the new area bodies that will be asked to carry out many of the responsibilities of county councils.

I envisage huge opposition to the changes. Imagine if Welshpool and Guilsfield councils are told to merge for instance? That would be one to look forward to witnessing. But the changes will have to be implemented.



Thousands of model cars are on show



The museum in Montgomery



Two Dinky cars, a Jaguar SS10 and an Alvis

Driving ambition behind town's model car museum

TOBY NEAL finds out more about a small-scale visitor attraction which is heaven for model car fans

BUT aren't they just toys? "Yes," says Bruce Lawson. "No! Some are, some are not," says John Nunn.

Whatever you like to call them, there are thousands and thousands of these model cars making this small-scale museum a heavenly place for boys of all ages – and girls too, as it all started with two model cars, a Jaguar SS and an Alvis Sports, given to a 12-year-old girl many years ago.

"If this was in the middle of Shrewsbury we would have hundreds of visitors," says Bruce. Instead, the Cloverlands Model Car Museum is in Montgomery and is aiming to spread the word a bit more.

"We have run this show very informally and done remarkably well with it, but we thought it was time to tell the world about it. When people come they go wow. They are amazed. This is the finest public collection of historical model cars in the United Kingdom."

It all began with one of those unexpected discoveries. Bruce got in touch with Gillian Rogers of Llansantffraid as he wrote a book about Charles Rolls of Rolls-Royce fame, and she is a member of the Society of Motor Historians, which he too had just joined, and he wanted to tap into her knowledge.

"When I spoke to her on the telephone she asked if I would like to come and see



Neil Dunbar with some of his models on display

her collection, called the Cloverlands Museum.

"I said yes. This was totally incidental – I had never heard of it before."

So Bruce went along with Roy Marthews.

Shed

"There was a shed, and we opened the door and walked in, and it was like a Miss Havisham moment."

"It was covered in cobwebs and dusty. "We were the first people to view the collection for five years."

The collection was of 1,500 model cars of all makes and sizes, including the familiar Dinky, Corgi, Matchbox, and Tri-ang, as well as many more obscure items.

Bruce was to learn the story behind

Gillian's huge collection. "She is 78 or 79 now, but when she was 12 her father gave her two models and she started collecting."

"She bought a 1934 Singer Le Mans car in 1958 and took it to Le Mans as a single girl, and the Nurburgring, and drove the car daily for 40 years."

"She sold it when she gave up driving, but still sends it a birthday card every year."

"Roy and I asked if we could rent her collection and put it on display here in Montgomery, and she agreed."

Animal-lover Gillian had called it the Cloverlands Museum in memory of Clover, her favourite dog, who loved riding in cars and spent many a happy hour on the parcel shelf, like a living mascot.

Bruce and Roy Marthews had come

across the collection in August 2014 and the Cloverlands museum opened above the library in Arthur Street, Montgomery, in the spring of 2015 in a part of the Montgomery Institute which had been empty, but has previously seen various uses, latterly as a pool and table tennis room.

The model museum is a registered charity and its custodians are Bruce, John Nunn, Roy Marthews, Neil Dunbar, and Nick Stephens.

And since its opening, it has grown and grown as its renown has spread.

"We have had people turning up saying that they have x amount of models in their loft, and asking if we want to put them on show," said John.

The upshot is that it now has about 4,000 model cars on display – there's no space to put any more on show – and has access to thousands more, allowing it to rotate and freshen up the displays. The core collection is Gillian's, but others include 300 the museum snapped up from Canada, and 1,000 racing cars inherited by the son of a Liverpoolian who donated them to the museum.

Shrine

Bruce said: "We have become a shrine for veteran motor car people. People keep giving us things. We have a Rolls-Royce flag from the top of the Sentinel factory in Shrewsbury which came from a lady in Worthen, whose father was a director there. She knows about the museum and asked if we would like it. I said yes please."

Gillian's contribution is of course centre stage. Not only did she collect models, but she made them too.

The museum is free for children and £2.50 for adults. It opens Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in the summer and Fridays and Saturdays only at winter. Visit www.cloverlandsmuseum.org.uk

WORKING FOR YOU



There have been almost 2,000 casualties on the stretch of the A5 between Shrewsbury and Chirk since 1991, of which over 50 have been fatal. The estimated cost of these incidents stands at £180 million, not to mention the appalling human cost. In addition, the economic damage which the frequent congestion and delays cause to the local area is profound. Dualling the road has been one of my longest-running and, at times, most frustrating campaigns, but real progress is now being made to bring the A5 up to modern standards. A good road network is vital to any economy; improvements must be made. Last week, I had a very constructive meeting bringing together Shropshire Council, Midlands Connect and Highways England. The council demonstrated that it is on course to submit its detailed bid for dualling to the Government's Road Investment Strategy project – "RIS2" – in advance of the deadline on February 7. Support from the Welsh Government is vital to the success of the A5 bid, so it was great that Ken Skates – the Welsh Transport Minister – confirmed that he will do all in his power to help, bolstering the existing arguments with safety and congestion data collected from over the border.

The meeting also discussed the plans for the A483 Pant/Llanymynech bypass. The information so far gathered for this project is less extensive than that for the A5, but there are draft proposals for the bypass's potential route. The Pant/Llanymynech bypass has been a difficult conundrum to fix as it is a strategic Welsh road yet the danger and the cost fall in England. Once again, the co-operation of Ken Skates and the Welsh Government in providing cross-border studies will be imperative if we are to submit a second bid to RIS2 next month.

Following these productive discussions, I met the Roads Minister Jesse Norman in Westminster. He stressed the importance of thorough, up-to-date information, but confirmed that if both bids are received by the February deadline then he will be in a position to move forward with them.

These are positive, exciting steps. Once the bids are submitted, Midlands Connect and Highways England must collect more data, which will highlight how compelling the case is for urgent improvements to our roads for the sake of the safety and prosperity of the whole area.

Owen Paterson
North Shropshire MP

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Q: We are a successful business about to open two new offices and are looking to build our own intranet-based personnel system with a virtual two-way access platform. As there will be personal information stored and shared on it, what should we be aware of regarding data protection?

A: In mid-2018 a new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be coming into force. The main difference between the GDPR and the current Data Protection Act will be the requirement to put into place procedures that will comply with new transparency and individuals' rights provisions. The emphasis will be on the way data is kept, shared and ultimately removed. If you do not have a data controller now would be a good time to appoint one as there is provision for some hefty turnover-based fines for non-compliance.

Carry out an information audit and document all the personal data you hold, where it came from and who you share it with. This includes information on external individual customers or clients as well as staff. As you will be network sharing it will be essential to store accurate personal data, so incorporate a system procedure to ensure inaccuracies can be put right and communicated globally.

Currently when collecting personal data you must inform people, usually through a privacy notice, of your identity and how you intend to use their data. Under the GDPR you will also have to explain your legal basis for processing the data, the data retention period and the person's right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office if they are unhappy with the way you are handling their data.

Carrying out a complete review of all your company's documentation, data and information sharing procedures now would give you time to run your proposed provisions past your legal team and iron out any potential problems.

Further information relating to this question is available from Robert Williams, a Partner with GHP Legal. For an appointment visit www.ghplegal.com or contact one of our offices: Oswestry 01691 659194, Chirk 01691 777949, Wrexham 01978 291456, Llangollen 01978 860313. We offer free legal diagnostic clinics (no appointment necessary). In Oswestry, Wednesdays 12noon-3pm for Personal Injury, Employment & Family matters. In Wrexham, Mondays 9.30am-12noon for Employment matters, 12noon-3pm for Personal Injury & Family matters. GHP Legal is authorised and regulated by the SRA 51566, and Lexcel Accredited.



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Get a grip of the rich selfish firms

THE Government is rather keen to get people as young as 16 years to start saving for a pension.

Having saved for pensions by various means I wonder whether it was all worth it and if our grandparents didn't have the right idea and kept their money under the bed. Banks, building societies, ISAs etc, etc earn little or no interest and any dividends from shares is taxed to the hilt. In the event that you reach old age and require care then

most of your money and in most cases your home is sold and used to pay your keep.

Worse than that your costs will be inflated to help pay for the person in the next bed who may have never been able to save for old age but equally may have been one who squandered every ha'penny and hid what was left.

Today we are informed that the government have given permission for local councils to increase our rates by up to six per

cent. Non ratepayers won't give a damn but we who have saved will be faced with totally unacceptable rises in our cost of living and no sign of a worthwhile increase in earnings.

Mrs May needs to get a grip of the obscenely rich companies who pay the very least into our country whilst taking everything available to them.

**ADRIAN WILLIAMS
Bratton**

Many leavers did not believe anything the politicians said

I SEE that we have another whinging Remainer in Christine Jenkins of Shrewsbury who believes that she has the ability to read people's minds – millions of them, i.e. "Those who voted to leave, did so on the basis of lies!"

We are talking about 17 million minds – it is utter rubbish!

Yes, there was and still is lies from politicians and the historic fact is that the remainers lied twice as often and three times louder than the leavers!

Miss Jenkins will probably agree the fact that the older, more experienced elector voted to leave.

These people, of which I am one, are way past believing the word of any politician.

We watched as our country was bundled into the Common Market by a Prime Minister who lied, we watched as he handed over our sovereignty to a foreign power, a self-serving, unelected power that does not do democracy, logic or even truth, a foreign power which makes laws which countermand British law – what we saw was wrong and we did something about it!

Miss Jenkins notes that the Brexit negotiations appear to be in chaos but fails to point the finger at the instigators of that chaos, the whinging Remainers backed by many hundreds of politicians and peers who profited greatly from this foreign power which throws money, our money, to solve its problems.

All have put themselves before their country, all have refused to accept the result of a democratic vote and all have greatly assisted the EU in its efforts to rob us blind before we go. We should sack every politician who voted to remain and disband the unelected House of Lords – preferably next week!

**BOB WYDELL
Oswestry**

We have been sold out to EU

MANY years ago Jesus was sold for a few pieces of silver.

Now Theresa May and her treacherous Tories have sold out the British people to the EU.

This time though it's us that is expected to still abide by their rules.

We had the referendum to avoid this and so we could be "independent" of the European Union.

It is not them but us who are expected, with thousands of years of inflation, to pay them 50 billion pieces of silver.

Absolutely atrocious. Makes me wonder why we ever bothered to vote in the first place.

**MARTIN EDDIES
Shrewsbury**

Old image shows historic ancestral home



This picture of Brynkinalt Hall, ancestral home of the Trevor family at Chirk, is from old family albums in the possession of Sir Beville Stanier. His grandmother Connie wrote a caption saying "Brynkinalt, Oct-16 Chirk," and there is also "Lord & Lady Trevor, Miss Hug (it looks like Hug, but may be meant to be Hugh) Jones." Possibly the Trevors were the hosts at a social event there. The year is not given, but other pictures on the same page are between 1910 and 1913. The Staniers lived at the time at Peplow Hall.

Council should not be trying to expand its empire

SHROPSHIRE Council, talks through his hat and simply looks to expand his empire and justify an increased remuneration.

We are told the council faces a serious deficit and is selling tenanted farms to balance the books.

Yet it is buying shopping centres to regenerate Shrewsbury.

The council's prime duty is to provide services, these diminishing, it raises excessive rates to fund them, mine £2,500 p.a.

They are not property developers, have no expertise or business acumen to manage such enterprises and will be obliged to pay someone else to manage them.

The council has yet to bring the theatre to profit.

His responsibility is to county not Shrewsbury alone, his statement 'the public want us to do this' does not hold water, what he means is Shrewsbury residents want it, it is of no benefit to me nor I suggest three quarters of our county's population.

**JOHN MAYNE
Bridgnorth**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Readers' Letters,
The Chronicle,
14 Salop Road,
Oswestry, SY11 2NU

EMAIL

iajn.stjohn@
shropshirestar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Bobby's other role in times long ago

MAY I suggest that if any shoppers in Oswestry wish to be reminded of what a police officer looks like, they take a glance in Home Bargain store's window in Bailey Street.

There is a life-size photo of one. A pity that the store doesn't incorporate a clock in it and then it would be performing one of the traditional roles of the "bobby".

For younger readers there is an old Victorian song which goes "If you want to know the time, ask a policeman".

**DENNIS MORRIS
Oswestry**

Doing nothing on planning is a recipe for chaos

IF you wish to build on your land you are normally required to gain building regulations approval.

In addition, depending on the size and position of the structure, you are required to gain planning permission.

If your structure is not up to building regulation standards and if it will impact on others, it could not be given consent if it was approved for.

But if you forge ahead in absence of approval, it is very unlikely that there will be consequences.

There are three options a council has in respect of a challenged substandard structure. The first is, nothing. The second is to require permissions to be sought retrospectively. The third is to give notice for the structure to be removed. The first option is the route nearly always taken.

This state of affairs is a recipe for chaos, giving the green light to unpleasant structures and is reprehensible.

**PETER KEEN
Oswestry**

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Annual quiz is set to take place

AN invitation has been sent for canal enthusiasts and friends, and anyone else who would like to come, to the annual quiz of the Shrewsbury, District & North Wales branch of Inland Waterways Association on Monday.

The event, at the Narrowboat Inn, Whittington, will have questions set by last year's winning team, Michael and Eileen Limbrey of Oswestry and Charles and Sheri Warren of Shawbury.

Michael Limbrey said, "This quiz has taken place every year for the last 20 years. It is always a popular event – so much so that we have outgrown the room we used to use."

The meeting will be at 7.30pm, with a meal served from 6pm for those who wish. The Narrowboat Inn is on the A495 Ellesmere to Whittington road.

Chamber group to meet up again

THE next Oswestry Chamber of Commerce meeting will be an open night and networking evening, officials have said.

Mark Derham, who owns the Bridge Coffee business, has taken over as chamber chairman.

Mr Derham said he wanted to hear what businesses wanted from the organisation.

He said: "The main item on agenda is 'What do you, as a member, want from your chamber in 2018?'. Do you want to change the format, the meeting day, the frequency of meetings? This is your chance to shape the Oswestry Chamber for 2018."

The meeting is on Wednesday next week with a 6pm start at the Wynn-stay Hotel, Church Street, Oswestry.

People are asked to email oschamberclerk@gmail.com if they plan to attend.

Former exchange boss will be guest speaker

Report by Jonny Drury

A PRIVATE school near Oswestry is holding its annual business lunch in March with the former CEO of the London Stock Exchange Group Xavier Rolet the guest speaker.

Moreton Hall is welcoming Mr Rolet to the annual event on March 14, which has been held for the last eight years and is a firm fixture in the business diaries of Shropshire business leaders.

Past guest speakers include Zanny Minton Beddoes, editor of The Economist and Fiona Marshall, brand marketing director of ASOS.

Last year, the guest speakers were Nick Wheeler, founder and chairman of Charles Tyrwhitt Shirts and Lord Hague, former leader of the Conservative Party, Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House.

Moreton Enterprises, the unique business venture run by the year 12 girls, will also give their annual business presentation outlining their sales strategy for the year.

Moreton Enterprises was established over 30 years ago and although unrecognisable today by those pioneering girls, the aim is still the same to challenge and inspire young women by nurturing a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship in the heart of the school.

The Business Lunch, sponsored for the fifth year by Investec Wealth and Investment Ltd, is an opportunity for business leaders to network, promote their company and to hear the most up to date economic and political opinions.

Hall is at centre of £250,000 bid



Councillor Rob Milton takes a look at Morda Village Hall near Oswestry which is at the centre of a major improvement plan

A VILLAGE hall could be transformed into a more modern community hub under a £250,000 proposal.

Early discussions have taken place into the re-development of Morda Village Hall, near Oswestry, which has been described as being no longer fit for purpose.

The building, which currently houses a village hall, social club, day centre, snooker room and other meeting rooms would be replaced by a new modern designed building to cater for the whole of the community. Work to improve the sports facilities at the adjacent Morda United Football Club would also be included.

Plans have been backed by members of Shropshire Council and would be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy that has been created by the substantial number of housing developments in the village in the last 10 years.

Oswestry Rural Parish Councillor Robert Milton believes it would be the biggest ever investment in the growing village. He said: "This project would give Morda a hub for various different organisations to use, and is what Morda needs to bring it up to standard with Oswestry and other villages."

Tourism tax plan would hit jobs says new report

A NEW report has warned of the damage a tourism tax could cause to the industry in Wales.

The Welsh Government is proposing to introduce a tourism tax on business in the country, but businesses in Mid Wales, who rely heavily on tourism, have criticised the tax.

Members of the Wales Tourism Alliance have met officials of cabinet secretary for finance and local government Mark Drakeford's treasury team to express their worries about a possible tax. It is one of four ideas for new taxes on which the Welsh Government has invited views.

The alliance is so concerned about the proposal that it asked tourism expert Professor Annette Pritchard to prepare a report. In her study, she warns that a tourism tax would damage the economic performance, brand and prospects for Wales.

The report states: "The UK tourism industry has one of the world's highest tax burdens. Most European countries have significantly reduced VAT on their tourism industries to encourage growth, employment and revenue."

"The imposition of higher taxes has been shown to inhibit growth, employment, revenue and holiday-taking. Tourism outperforms all Welsh Government priority sectors and is the country's second largest employer. A proposed tourism tax will damage its economic performance, brand and prospects."

"It will also increase social exclusion, undermine policies to create a more healthy Wales, limit opportunities for economic growth in Welsh-speaking heartlands and disproportionately impact those least able to afford to take a holiday."

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Reality TV headteacher lined up as guest speaker

STAR of the BAFTA winning TV show, *Educating Essex*, and author of 'The Best Job in the World', Vic Goddard has been announced as guest speaker at this year's professional learning conference held at The Marches School in Oswestry.

The conference will be held on February 26. Mr Goddard, principal of Passmore Academy, is renowned for his straight-talking approach and refusing to let a student fail, in the BBC fly-on-the-wall style documentary.

He will be accompanied by other speakers including Professor Dame Alison Peacock, chief executive of the Chartered College of Teaching, Ross McGill, experienced teacher and school leader and Sir William Atkinson, one of the UK's most respected headteachers.

Over 300 professionals working in the education sector have registered to attend the one-day event packed with motivational talks and over 15 workshops focusing on leading learning, growth mindset and effective partnerships. The professional learning conference in partnership with the Strategic School Improvement Fund is the third event hosted at the Marches School following the success of the Festival of Education last year with child psychologist Professor Robert Winston addressing the audience.

Sarah Longville, CEO of The Marches Academy Trust, said: "For the third consecutive year we are fortunate to be able to continue stimulating our school colleagues on a national level with speakers including Sir William Atkinson, the inspiration behind the BBC's drama *Hope and Glory*."

The event is open to everyone working in primary, secondary and further education.

Cash stolen from safe in raid at coffee shop

Report by Jonny Drury

AN independent coffee shop has been hit by burglars who broke in and stole a substantial amount of cash.

Milano's coffee shop, on Old Chapel Court in Oswestry, was broken into in the early hours of Wednesday morning last week, with two people prising the door of the shop open and breaking into a safe.

It is the biggest theft the shop has suffered and owner Jonathan Roberts said it is sad not just for himself and his wife, but everyone in Oswestry.

He said: "My wife has been from here for years, and I've settled here and it is just my favourite place in the world, and it is sad for us and the town that something like this has happened."

"They have spent about 15 minutes in here, found the safe and stolen a substantial amount of money. Police have been here getting forensics and there is CCTV of the pair, so hopefully something will come of it, we don't know."

"Thanks goes though to all our customers who have been fantastic, and very supportive."

The shop has been hit before, by youngsters getting in through a fire exit and sitting having tea before stealing cans of soft drinks.

The culprits were caught on that occasion. Mr Roberts added: "It was quite disappointing to discover it, but we were able to open the following day which was good. After the last theft, the landlord to be fair to him put up a new iron gate but they've got over that as well."

Hospice receives £300 cash boost



Pictured are, back from left, Shelley Hurdley, Lyndsey Paddock and Lynsey Kilvert, and, front, Alison and Althea Mullis

TWO organisations which cater for youngsters have done their bit to help Hope House Children's Hospice in Morda near Oswestry.

Lynsey Kilvert, fundraiser at Hope House, said: "We had a lovely visit from Lyndsey Paddock and Shelly Hurdley from Explorers in Trefonen and Little Explorers Pre-School in Shrewsbury."

"They brought us a cheque for £300 from a Christmas raffle they ran in memory of Arthur Mullis who was the focus of our #Arthursstory campaign late last year."

Little Arthur was just two when he passed away.

His story was the centrepiece of a campaign run by the hospice to raise awareness of what it does and to raise money for the cause.

His family were helped by the hospice in their grief.

His mother Alison and his sister Althea were at the hospice for the presentation of the cheque.

The hospice is always looking for fundraisers to help it provide its vital services.

Anyone interested in fundraising for Hope House Children's Hospice should call (01691) 671671.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rotary clubs go to the cinema

THREE rotary clubs joined forces to celebrate their links to the worldwide campaign to eradicate polio.

The Oswestry, Cambrian and Borderland Rotary Clubs were given a special showing of the film, *Breathe*, the inspiring true story of a young man smitten by polio in the 1950s.

Rotary district governor Beryl Cotton was also at the film showing at the Kinoculture cinema on Oswestry. She said: "The road to eradicating polio has been long and hard and we're not there yet, but at least the end is in sight."

"For the past 30 years The Rotary, in conjunction with other organisations including the Bill Gates Foundation, have helped to get closer to the goal and have reduced polio cases by 99.9 per cent in that time."

Chance to enjoy a bit of opera fun

OPERA returns to Oswestry in April with a production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

North West England's professional touring opera company, Heritage Opera, will take to the stage with the humorous morality tale.

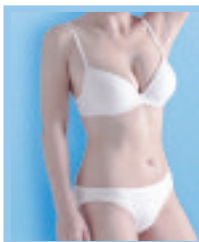
Mike Coppock, one of those organising the event, said: "Così fan tutte is packed with beautiful music and unforeseen moral dilemmas."

"The production includes a cast of six of the company's superb performers, accompanied by a five-piece ensemble."

It will be performed at The Marches Theatre in the Marches School on April 15 at 6pm. Doors will open at 5pm.

Tickets are available from the Rowan Thorn shop in Oswestry, or by calling (01691) 238227 and are £26 or £24 for seniors. Under 18s are free accompanied by a paying adult.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Police make appointment

CHIEF Superintendent Vicki Evans has been appointed new head of uniformed policing for Dyfed Powys Police.

Beginning her career with Hertfordshire Constabulary in 2001, she moved on to complete a number of roles, working for Bedfordshire Police and holding the post of Detective Chief Inspector for Luton and South Bedfordshire.

Miss Evans said: "I was born and bred in Pembrokeshire, and my family still live there. I am delighted to return to work in the area I consider home. I've always wanted to come back home."

Leader backing smacking ban

THE Welsh Liberal Democrat leader says a ban on smacking children is a matter of common sense.

Jane Dodds, from Welshpool, who was elected as leader in 2017, has responded to a 12-week consultation on the issue by the Welsh Government.

Proposals would see the removal of reasonable punishment as a defence for assault or battery, and would outlaw smacking as a form of punishment in Wales.

Mrs Dodds said: "The Welsh Liberal Democrats have consistently supported banning smacking by ending the defence of reasonable chastisement."

"This common sense step is supported by children's organisations across Wales and gives children the same protections from assault as their adult peers."

Housing scheme given the council's go-ahead

Report by Jonny Drury

SHELTERED accommodation for people with learning disabilities will be built in Welshpool after being passed by councillors.

Wales and West Housing Association lodged a planning application with Powys County Council to build eight sheltered bungalows and a staffing unit on land off Foundry Lane in Welshpool.

Planners at the council had proposed that the application be accepted by councillors and be given conditional planning consent.

The proposed site near to the Montgomery Canal has been left unused for some time and is allocated within the Powys Unitary Development Plan for housing, and is proposed to accommodate 10 dwellings.

The application includes the housing, along with formation of vehicular access and roadway, parking and all associated works. The scheme will comprise two homes to be for independent living and six for assisted living, for individuals with learning difficulties. Residents will receive care from staff within their own homes with staff accommodation to be placed on site. A site notice was put up and in the time it was in place no objections were received to the proposed development.

Welshpool Town Council supported the application and said: "The council is keen to support affordable housing and for local needs wherever possible."

Fire crews' bag it and bank it plea



Firefighters from Welshpool Fire Station are supporting the campaign

BAG it and bank it is the message from these firefighters.

Rather than the usual fire safety message the crews from Welshpool Fire Station are urging people to have a spring clean-out and take their unwanted textiles along to the special yellow container outside the headquarters in Severn Road.

Fire stations across the UK are involved in the Bag it and Bank it campaign. Billy Barrett, from Welshpool, said: "This year is the 75th birthday of the firefighters charity. To mark this anniversary Welshpool Firefighters are promoting this year's #bagitandbankit campaign, and with your help we're hoping to raise as much money as possible from textile recycling from our station's clothes bank in 2018."

Proceeds from the sale of the textiles goes to the firefighters' charity which supports over 5,000 people a year, serving and retired firefighters and their families.

It supports a wide range of services including rehabilitation, health and well-being, nursing and mental health.

Residents 'left in the lurch' over broadband

A POLITICIAN believes people in Mid Wales who have been promised superfast broadband have again been "left in the lurch".

Montgomeryshire AM Russell George has been championing better broadband across Montgomeryshire and Powys for years and believes that Superfast Cymru, a publicly-funded roll out scheme which ended in December, was a "public communications disaster".

Mr George raised the point at First Minister's questions with Carwyn Jones, who said the government could consider how best to ensure people can get connected.

BT Openreach had been carrying out the work under a contract with funding from Europe, and the UK and Welsh Governments, and said in December more than 700,000 properties had been added.

However, Mr George said residents are still not connected.

He said: "My constituents have been repeatedly promised fibre broadband only to be told that an upgrade will be delayed on several occasions."

"Now they find they have been left in the lurch because Openreach has run out of time."

Public funds had been given to Openreach to extend the project.

The First Minister admitted communication had not been adequate and that some structures had not been finished as a result of the Superfast Cymru project coming to an end in December. He said the government was considering how best to ensure more people are connected.

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Time to get together with your loved one

12
Oswestry & Border Chronicle
Thursday, February 1, 2018

Commercial feature

HOTELS, restaurants and venues across the Oswestry and Welshpool area are gearing up for another great Valentine's Day celebration.

A meal out with your loved one is a great way to celebrate the special occasion.

Or why not try a night away in one of our area's great hotels?

If it is that special gift you are looking for, then many of our fantastic small independent stores have that perfect something.

And if you are a bit of a traditionalist, then our flower shops have all your floral requirements covered.

The popularity of Valentine's Day has grown over the years and the celebration can trace its origins back through history.

It originated as a Western Christian liturgical feast day honouring one or more early saints named Valentinus, and is recognized as a significant cultural and commercial celebration in many regions around the world, although it is not a public holiday in any country.

Several martyrdom stories associated with the various Valentines that were connected to February 14 were added to later martyrologies, including a popular account of Saint Valentine of Rome which indicated he was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire.

According to legend, during his imprisonment, Saint Valentine healed the daughter of his jailer, Asterius, and before his execution, he wrote her a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell.

The day first became associated with romantic love within the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th century, when the tradition of courtly love flourished. In 18th-century England, it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by



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presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards.

In more recent times the celebration has been seen as a chance to celebrate romance and spend time with your loved one.

Hotels in our area are gearing up for a busy time as Valentine's Day approaches.

We give from the heart on Valentines Day so why not escape with the one you love to the

Wynnstay Hotel & Spa, Oswestry where "Love is in the air"?

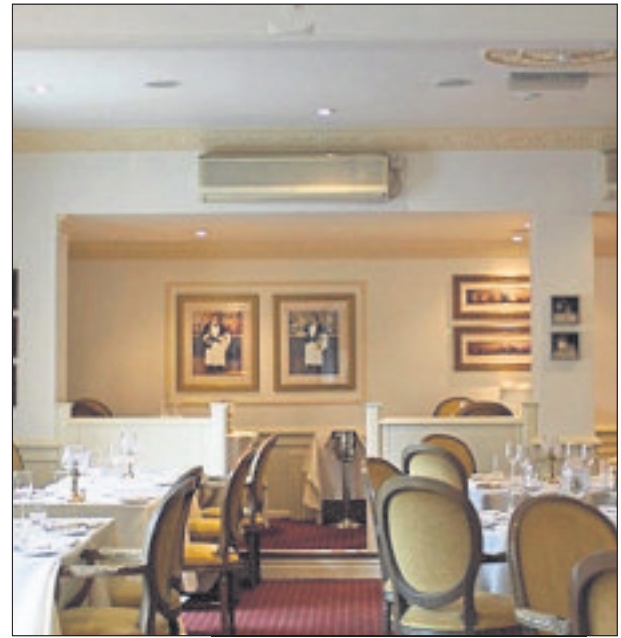
Wine and dine your loved one with an intimate candlelit dinner in The Restaurant.

The hotel's experienced team of chefs have created a delicious menu, the perfect treat for your Valentine. The menu is available on Saturday 10th and 12th, 13th and 14th February. Booking is essential and reservations

can be made by calling 01691 655261. Or if you are after something a little more low key why not book a table in Wilsons Bar and Courtyard where you can indulge a three course meal for only £35 per person?

Available on Wednesday 14th February only.

To add a little extra romance and pampering the hotel is also offering a special rate of £90 B&B to include a bottle of chilled Prosecco and



How about a dining treat at the Wynnstay Hotel and Spa in Oswestry?

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At the Beauty Suite the hotel has created a spa experience for two with Valentine's Day in mind, the perfect way to unwind, relax and enjoy some well earned quality time together.

The Valentines spa day for two is available throughout February.

Bookings can be made by calling The Beauty Suite on 01691 668910.

Valentine's Day Menu 2018

Served on Wednesday 14th February
in our Riverside Restaurant

A Glass of prosecco on Arrival

Starters

Cauliflower Veloute, Curry Cream, Toasted Almonds
Chicken Liver Parfait, Confit Onions, Brioche Toast
Salmon Graviola, Horseradish Cream, Orange Dressing

Main Courses

Roasted Duck Breast, Celeriac Puree, Rhubarb, Cinnamon Jus
Beef Wellington, Garlic Pomme Fondantes, Parsley Puree,
Red Wine Sauce
Poached Salmon, Piperade, Garlic Pomme Mouseline &
Tarragon Sauce
Wild Mushroom, Confit Red Onion & Goats Cheese Tartelette,
House Salad with a Hazelnut Dressing

Desserts

White Chocolate & Passion Fruit Mousse, Nougatine Layer
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On Arrival

Prosecco cocktail and canapé on arrival
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Amuse Bouche

Spiced diver caught Scottish scallops (G)
with cauliflower purée, apple, coriander and cumin velouté

Starters

Tataki of yellow fin tuna, raw vegetables, sweet chilli jelly, wasabi mayonnaise, Thai purée (G)
or
Panko mozzarella, dressed rocket, pine-nut and sun-dried tomato salsa (V)

Palette Cleanser

Rioja and pink grapefruit granita (V,G,D)

Main Courses

Breast of Gressingham Duck (Cooked Pink)
with a compote of English rhubarb, glazed baby vegetables, dauphine potatoes,
crispy plum and leg croquette, sweet wine sauce
or

Duo of Beef

Fillet of welsh beef, oxtail and marmite ragout, shallot purée, bone marrow crumb,
scorched foie gras and a Madeira sauce
or

Assiette of Vegetables (V,G)

Baked Portobello mushroom, heritage tomato stack, courgette stuffed with feta and red pepper,
duo of pepper coulis, toasted pine nut and basil crumb, parmesan crisp

Dessert

A lover's mosaic of chocolate and strawberries to share

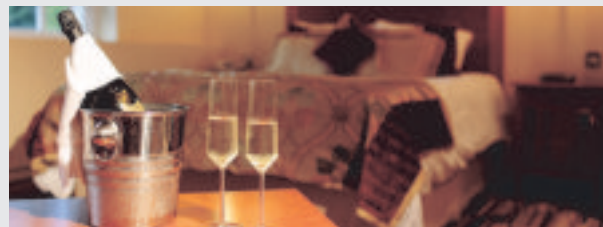
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New health boss's pledge on quality

A NEW chairman has been appointed to the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust.

Ben Reid, a qualified accountant who lives in Worcestershire, will take up the role until January 31, 2021.

He will be paid £32,158 per year, for which he is expected to devote two to three days per week for his duties as chairman.

He said: "I am delighted to be given the opportunity to chair the trust at this exciting time."

"There are a range of challenges ahead of us, but it is clear that the board and management are determined to develop the service to ensure the population we serve get the quality of provision they deserve. I look forward to being part of that team and using my previous experiences to help steer us through to our shared objective."

Mr Reid is group chief executive of the Mid-Counties Co-operative, a position he has held for 30 years.

He is a former director of the Co-operative Group and a former director of the Co-operative Banking Group.

He is currently working part-time for the Co-op, with a view to full retirement later this year.

Alongside his current role, Mr Reid has held non-executive appointments including chairman of Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust from 2004 to 2016.

He takes over from Professor Peter Latchford who was chairman from October 2013 until December 2017.

Patients are put on hold by service

SHROPSHIRE'S neurology service will not be taking new patients until the spring, health bosses have confirmed.

Dr Julie Davies, director of performance and delivery at Shropshire clinical commissioning group, said she was hopeful the service would open to new referrals in April.

The service had to temporarily close to new referrals last year, with health bosses saying they were unable to manage demand due to staffing difficulties. But Dr Davies said that health chiefs have been working with tertiary centres on plans which could see neurologists from outside the county travelling to Shropshire to see patients.

She said: "Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust is waiting for the formal proposal to come back from the tertiary centre."

"Then we will have a better idea of the timescale it will take. It's not open to new referrals at the moment. We hope to have additional capacity from April."

Neurology services treat conditions affecting the nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord, nerve, muscles and their connections.

Fishy inquiries spark police alert

POLICE are alerting people to possible fishy business by cold callers.

A group of men claiming to be from Middlesbrough were reported to be cold calling and doorstep selling in Whittington Road, Fox's Field, and elsewhere in the village of Gobowen near Oswestry on Tuesday last week. Two men claiming to be selling fish were reported to be calling on householders in the Lutton Close area of Oswestry the previous day and police were also told about doorstep sellers in the Cambrian Drive area of the town.

Event to help hospice

ELLESMERE Friends of Hope House Children's Hospice will hold a spring coffee morning on Saturday, March 10 at Ellesmere Town Hall.

The fundraiser starts at 10am.

Son speaks of devastation of father's murder



Satnam Singh Blugher was murdered at the diner he ran between Welshpool and Shrewsbury

THE son of murdered Shropshire businessman Satnam Singh Blugher has spoken of the devastating effects of the tragedy on his family.

Hardeep Singh, known as Harry, found his father's body at Tony's Diner on the A458 at Halfway House, between Shrewsbury and Welshpool, after the proprietor failed to open the door for a delivery on June 26, his day off.

He had been stabbed and struck more than 50 times by a kitchen worker the previous

night after closing time. In an emotional victim impact statement Harry Singh explained how as the family mourned their loss of the 67-year-old, they were left shouldering mounting debts and a capital gains bill from the taxman as a result of the untimely death.

Last week Belkar Singh, 58, was jailed for life for the murder of Mr Blugher, who was known locally as Mr B. He was caught red-handed with the victim's life savings and jew-



Satnam Singh Blugher and his son Hardeep Singh spending time together

ellery belonging to the family two days after fleeing to Handsworth, in Birmingham.

Following the jury's unanimous guilty verdict Harry Singh's statement was read aloud to the court by prosecuting barrister Mr Clive Mason QC as part of the sentencing procedure.

"Since my dad was so brutally murdered last summer it has sent me to a very dark place," the hearing at Stafford was told.

"I was left in the diner, to sort out all the

mess left behind at the same time as trying to set up my new Subway business. Even to this day I have no idea how I got through it."

"I can't go back into the diner which still has a mortgage on it. We've had to lease it out for a fraction of the value," he also stated. He spoke of how he previously thought of killer Belkar Singh as being "likeable" and had invited him round to his home for dinner on Christmas Eve.

Students are in rehearsals for their beautiful show



The students have been rehearsing ahead of the show



Students get to grips with their roles



Dozens of students are involved in the forthcoming production at the school

Report by Jonny Drury

STUDENTS from the performing arts department at Oswestry's Marches School have been busy set designing, stitching their costumes and rehearsing their lines – all in preparation for performances of their production of *Beauty and the Beast*.

The show will take to the stage on February 13-15 and is open to the general public.

The performing arts department has its largest turn-out at the auditions in September.

After much deliberation, the school cast Year 9 student Mia McKay and Year 12 student Libby Hughes to share the role of Belle, and Year 11 student Thom Hughes as the Beast.

Drama teachers Natalie Wright and Sophie McGreal along with music teacher Sophie King have been busy supporting the production. Miss Wright said: "We have had an intense rehearsal process with the students, they have worked extremely hard and we hope that we have a full audience in order to support the students each night. So much work behind the scenes has gone into preparing for what we hope will be the best production The Marches School has ever seen."

Alison Pearson, associate headteacher, said: "We have a large cast rehearsing hard for our production this year, taking place in the last week of this half term and it would be great to have a full house each night to support them and enjoy the amazing talents we have at the school."



A lot of work has been going on behind the scenes



Students from various age ranges are taking part in the school's performance



Staff and students have been working to ensure everything is alright on the night

Bosses insist changes to policing are not cuts but are the force reacting to challenges

FEWER officers will be stationed at police bases across Shropshire as part of changes by the force.

But bosses have insisted they were not making cuts and instead reacting to the challenges of patrolling the county.

Two serving officers, who do not wish to be named, have raised concerns about the changes by West Mercia Police.

One officer has claimed that, in April, there is a plan to reduce the number of officers in stations around the county.

The officer claimed the reductions would be in Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Bridgnorth and Market Drayton, with a 25 per cent cut, along with cuts in support.

West Mercia Police has admitted changes

Report by Jonny Drury

would be made, but insisted numbers would not be cut.

It said changes are being made to provide more resources during busier times.

Chief superintendent Charlie Hill said: "Over recent years there has been a reduction in officers but that does not automatically mean reduced police presence.

"We have made significant investments in technology such as mobile data devices, which help to keep our workforce visible and present in their communities.

"The change in shift pattern will provide more resources during the busier afternoons

and evenings. The changes will mostly affect officers who respond to the public's calls for service, and we are confident this will provide a better service, and greater protection for our staff. The changes will mean that we have fewer response officers available at quieter times of the day, but we also have neighbourhood officers, and specialist operational units who provide support during these times.

"Alongside the changes we are introducing to the response shift pattern, our Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable have committed to protecting officer numbers within our current teams of neighbourhood police constables and police community support officers for the next financial year."

Chief Superintendent Hill has also insisted

officer numbers will be maintained and neighbourhood team vacancies filled.

But one serving police officer said: "Personally I am appalled.

"If challenged, the police will try to dress this up as efficiency savings and 'agile' working.

"The fact will remain, officer numbers will be reduced.

"This will have a serious and damaging effect on the public and on individual police officers.

"We are already stretched to breaking point, with poor morale, and stress of an overburdened cohort of officers."

Alan Moseley, leader of Shrewsbury Town Council says the council was unaware of potential cuts, but pledged to fight them if any came to light.

Councillor did not take part in two votes because of tax row

Report by Dominic Robertson

A SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL cabinet member did not take part in two authority votes because he had received a summons for unpaid council tax.

Councillor Steve Davenport, who is currently Shropshire Council's member responsible for highways, said the situation had arisen in relation to a property that he rents out.

The councillor, who represented St Martins near Oswestry, was named in a Private Eye magazine report.

The report revealed he had been summonsed over £738.97 in unpaid council tax.

The summons was withdrawn after he paid the bill in full.

The situation, which arose in 2016/17, led to Councillor Davenport being unable to vote on two matters at a meeting in December 2016.

Frustrated

Councillor Davenport said he had been left frustrated at having to pay council tax he considered was the responsibility of someone else.

He said: "At a property I rent out to someone, they said they had left and had not paid the council tax so I was left with the bill.

"I actually fought it but I lost."

"It was my choice to opt out of voting, I said "I will leave the chamber" and I did.

"I was so angry because not only did they leave me with the bill but they left the property in an awful state.

"I actually paid someone else's council tax as far as I was concerned and I did not want to do that. It was very frustrating."

Claire Porter, head of legal and democratic services at Shropshire Council, confirmed Councillor Davenport had voluntarily withdrawn from voting.

She said: "Under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 a councillor whose council tax payments are two months' overdue must make a declaration to that effect, and refrain from voting on matters relating to budget requirements, council tax amounts, or precepts.

"At the meeting of the full Shropshire Council on December 15, 2016, Councillor Davenport acted in accordance with the legislation, and excused himself for two papers: Setting the Council Taxbase for 2017/18, and Financial Strategy 2017/18. This is recorded in the minutes of that meeting."

Village backs campaign over energy drinks



Youth club members with Peter Barker, Debbie Hall, Keith Allum, Andrew Faulks, Sue Herd and Carol Jones

A NUMBER of large supermarket chains have announced plans to ban the sale of energy drinks to youngsters – but now a village near Oswestry believes it is the first to totally ban children under 16 buying them.

Stans Superstore, St Martins Petrol Station and St Martins School in the village have all agreed to support the campaign, which was started by Keith Allum, who helps to run a youth club in the village.

Mr Allum said he was pleased to be leading the way.

He added: "I think if we can get one child to do it we can get them all to do it. We've all been working together putting this in place.

"We banned energy drinks here at the youth centre before Christmas and since we've banned them we've noticed a big difference in their behaviour.

"The businesses aren't losing out either as the kids are just buying other drinks instead of energy drinks.

"If we can educate the kids not to drink it then they've got a better chance of not buying it when they're older."

Mr Allum said he is trying to get other areas on board with the campaign.

"I feel it's quite an achievement," he added.

"I'm trying to spread the word and have been tweeting about it. I've had Jamie Oliver

liking my tweets." Andrew Faulks, owner of Stans, was happy to get on board, and said he hopes it makes a big difference in the area.

Sue Lovecy, headteacher at St Martins School, added: "As a school we banned these drinks several years ago but students were picking them up en-route to school and drinking them for breakfast. These drinks pose a serious threat to our children's health.

Darren Baker, owner of St Martins Petrol Station, said the business was happy to support the initiative.

He said: "We are more than happy to support him banning these drinks to children as this is also good for their wellbeing."

Youth services axe set to be reviewed by authority

YOUTH services in Powys will be reviewed within 12 months after the local authority agreed to close youth buildings across the county.

Powys County Council cabinet has previously agreed to give up its youth centre buildings in Welshpool, Llandrindod Wells, Brecon, Newtown and Ystradgynlais, although youth services will be offered elsewhere and youth workers will be retained.

At a full council meeting, Councillor Matthew Dorrance said he had wanted to oppose

the closures, but had been forced to bring a compromise motion as the decision had already been taken.

He said the £175,000 saved from the scrapping of the shire committees should be spent on young people, with the youth centres closures saving £220,000.

"I absolutely believe that you need to look at this again. Many young people in youth centres are voiceless and we need to speak for them," he said.

Councillor Huw Williams said Powys young-

sters were getting a raw deal and he gave a list of cuts which disproportionately affect young people.

He said: "They go to youth centres for fun, to meet people, to build relationships and find support, they provide a safe environment and can change behaviours at an early stage."

Newtown County Councillor Joy Jones said schools may not be the appropriate place for youth services, as excluded youngsters would not be able to access them.

Councillor Kathryn Silk said she had heard

many stories in the youth court of youngsters who got caught up in the criminal justice system because they could not find a safe place. She said youth clubs were value for money and it's a cost the council should pay.

Councillors noted their concern at the closure of youth centres.

They agreed the cabinet should engage young people in new plans and they agreed to review the quality and accessibility of the youth service within 12 months of the buildings' closures.

Hospital income reduced, board members told

INCOME at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital has reduced by £150,000 in the last month because of adverse weather conditions.

Board members heard from director of finance Craig Macbeth at a meeting about the hospital's financial performance in December.

He told members there was a reduced elective capacity, both for patients and the workforce, and the intense snowfall in December was a challenge to the hospital.

As a result of the adverse weather, Mr Macbeth said the income for the hospital reduced by £150,000, and that was coupled with the normal pressures it faces on a monthly basis.

The snowy conditions meant that the hospital could not utilise as much theatre time as normal.

Just 84.6 per cent of theatre lists were utilised in December, and the trust was 26 sessions short, partly due to the weather and partly due to not being able to secure sufficient additional sessions between Christmas and New Year.

Mr Macbeth also reported a deficit in December of £804,000, and the hospital was £183,000 behind its recovery plan target.

However he said cash balances remained static for the month of December which is in line with the plan.

Illustrator to be guest at history group

THE next meeting of Oswestry and Border History and Archaeology Group will be on Friday next week.

It will take place in the Methodist Church Hall in Castle Street at 7.30pm when John Swogger's subject will be Oswestry Heritage Comics: a new approach to public outreach for local archaeology, history and heritage.

John Swogger is an archaeological illustrator who lives near Oswestry, but works for large, international excavation and research projects around the world. Engaging public audiences with local heritage, he says, presents an ongoing struggle to local archaeology and history organisations. It is difficult to make information about the past meaningful, accessible and engaging all at once. Using comics, however, enables information to be presented in a way that overcomes unfamiliarity with a subject by "showing" as well as "telling".

The Oswestry Heritage Comics project is an example of how this approach can take the complexity of local history and archaeology and present it in an easily-accessible way to audiences who may not have taken much of an interest in the past before.

Full details are available at Oswestry Library and on the group's website at www.oswestry.histarch.uk

Research work in the spotlight

A HOSPITAL'S research department is bursting at the seams and needs room to expand, a clinical director has said.

Andrew Roberts, trust clinical director of research at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital, told board members at a meeting that the department, which has 19 staff on a full and part-time basis, needs room to expand.

However he said due to a shortage of extra space at the site in Gobowen, it would prove difficult.

He outlined to board members the work done by the clinical research team, and how it was of benefit both financially and medically.

He said: "We need enough space to expand our clinical research in an efficient fashion as the as the department is bursting at the seams.

"However I am pleased with the work of such a dedicated research office."

Despite the good work of the office, Mr Roberts was concerned on a few difficulties that faced his team.

He stated that one disappointing factor facing the research team was the Clinical Research Network funding that had reduced across the West Midlands.

He said the trust this year will receive £210,000 to support research, which is a £6,000 drop on the previous year.

16Two workers at restaurant broke visa rules

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, February 1, 2018

AN Indian restaurant is facing a fine of up to £40,000 after two workers were found to have overstayed their visas following an immigration raid.

Bengal Spices in Llanymynech was raided on January 18 as part of an operation that targeted six businesses across Wales.

In the eatery on Shropshire/Powys, a Bangladeshi man, aged 33, was found working having overstayed his work visa.

A further Bangladeshi man, aged 43, had also overstayed his visit visa and was found upstairs in living accommodation.

Both are now in detention pending removal from the UK.

Each business was served a notice warning that they faced a financial penalty of up to £20,000 for each illegal worker found, unless they could demonstrate that appropriate document checks were carried out.

Elsewhere, raids took place in Llandrindod Wells, Merthyr Tydfil, Chepstow, Llanfarian and Cardigan.

The Fish Bar at Weston House, High Street in Llandrindod Wells was visited on January 18, and a 44 year old Indian man was detained after checks revealed he had overstayed his work visa.

People with information about suspected immigration abuse can contact https://www.gov.uk/report-immigration-crime

Scrap metal stolen from drive in village

HIGH value scrap metals have been stolen from a driveway.

Two men in their mid 20s were seen in a van near to the driveway off St Martins Road, Rhewl, Gobowen when the items were stolen at lunchtime on January 18.

The theft was among a spate of incidents in the Oswestry area.

Over the weekend January 20-22, a fenced building site in Holyhead Road, West Felton, was raided and a steel container was broken into. A large number of power tools including various Stihl saws, generators and compaction tools, and copper cable were stolen.

Over the night of January 18-19 a fenced compound at a sewage treatment plant at Park Hall was broken into. Fuel was drained from plant machines and an attempt made to steal from a secured fuel tank.

Police are also investigating the burglary of a house in Jasmine Gardens, Oswestry over January 22-23. Cash and personal documents were stolen and a tap was left running causing damage to the property.

A garden shed in Whittington was broken into between January 17 and 18 and, on the same night items, including the SD card for a sat nav, were taken from a vehicle in Holbache Road, Oswestry.

Fellowship group elects officers

MEMBERS of the Oswestry group of the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship held their annual general meeting on January 2 at the Wynnstay Hotel, Oswestry and it was well attended.

The meeting started with the chairman Ruth Haile thanking the members for attending. She said that the group was running on a sound basis, both financially and numbers, though there was always a welcome for new members. The chairman reiterated her announcement a few months ago that she would not be offering herself as chairman for the coming year.

There then followed elections for the vacant positions. The new chairman is Jan Stokes and the vice chairmen are Anne Wilson and Dorothy Thomas Secretary is Dorothy Thomas and assistant secretary is Bernice Getkahn. The treasurer is Sue Jones and assistant treasurer is Ruth Haile. Membership secretary is Sue Jones and press secretary is Bernice Getkahn.

Meal organisers are Kathy Lunt and Jill Weaver and in charge of meet and greet are Nora Giannasi and Sue Coppack

The next meeting of the group will be held on Tuesday at the Wynnstay Hotel, commencing at 10.30am after coffee, as usual. The speaker on that occasion will be David Burton from Chirk Castle.

Archer Mikey is aiming to recover from illness in time to compete in Paralympics

JUST 16 months ago Mikey Hall was in Rio competing for the UK in the Paralympic Games.

Two years before, the talented archer had won a bronze medal and a gold medal in the Invictus Games.

He was training hard to win a place in the national team for future competitions when he was struck down with injury problems that have seen him spend the last seven months in the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, at times seriously ill.

Now Mikey is facing having to be transferred to a specialist hospital in Manchester for further treatment.

Despite coming close to losing his life, the 42-year-old former soldier from St Martins near

Report by Sue Austin

Oswestry says he is determined to battle back and regain his fitness.

He is hoping that he will be able to have an operation in March.

That will be his sixth during his stay in hospital.

Start

And then he will start the long road to recovery.

His aim is to win a place on the archery team at the Tokyo Paralympics in 2020.

He fell ill in June last year, days before he was due to compete in the Czech Republic.

He had emergency surgery but suffered septicæmia.

“I was put into a coma on life support,” he said.

“Five operations later I have an open wound that has to heal by itself before I can be discharged.

“I am doing physio but where as I was training hard in the gym before the illness now the physio is simply to try to get me to hold my weight.

“I have lost so much muscle mass I can’t do anything for myself any more.

“It is so, so difficult to keep positive.

“Everyone at the hospital has been brilliant, doctors, nurses everyone. But it is so hard at the moment.

“My aim is to have this operation and then build my fitness up again this year. Then next year I will be competing for a place in the archery team again. I am looking forward to Tokyo 2020.”

The ex-serviceman joined the army in 1995, serving in the 1st The Queen’s Dragoons Guard.

In 2000 he was seriously injured during a training exercise, when he fell off a rope bridge and broke his neck in two places and fractured his spine. He joined the Help for Heroes Sports Recovery Programme and excelled in archery. As well as the Paralympics, Mikey competed in Prince Harry’s inaugural Invictus Games in 2014, the World Para Archery Championships and Para Continental Championships.

Report by Lucy Todman

FIREFIGHTERS rescued a woman and a girl from a car which became stranded as flooding and high winds hit the region.

The rescue, just off the A483 near Pool Quay, Welshpool, happened when the car was caught in floodwaters.

A fire service spokeswoman said: “On arrival, the firefighters found a woman and a young girl in a car which had left the road.

“Firefighters used a rescue sled and wading poles to rescue the two and escort them to safety before towing the car out of flood water.

“The crews were sent from Welshpool and Aberystwyth.” It happened on Tuesday last week as surface water made for tricky driving conditions and river levels across rose. Fields and flood plains have been swamped with rising water and alerts have been placed on a number of waterways. At Montford Bridge, near Shrewsbury, the River Severn flooded surrounding fields and at Llanymynech fast-flowing flood waters spilled on to farm land.

Full

Dave Throup, Environment Agency manager for Herefordshire and Worcestershire, said: “The River Severn is very full at the moment.

“These are normal winter levels for the river and people are well used to this sort of weather.”

Emergency services have been kept busy in the last week attending a number of road traffic accidents. A lorry overturned near Welshpool in the early hours of Thursday last week. Two fire crews from Welshpool and Montgomery were sent to the incident at 6.18am.

The crash involved a HGV lorry which had left the road and tipped on its side near Castle Caereinion. The male driver of the lorry was released by fire crews and treated by Wales Ambulance Service crews. Wales Ambulance Service spokesman Liam Randall said: “We were called at approximately 6.25am this morning to reports of a single-vehicle road traffic collision involving a lorry on the A458 near Llanfair Caereinion. We sent two crews in emergency ambulances and a paramedic in a rapid response vehicle and a man was taken to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.”

Meanwhile, an overturned trailer blocked a road near Oswestry on Wednesday last week. The accident happened on the B5009 road at Babbinswood, near Whittington. No-one was injured but the road was blocked by the trailer.

Cheese and diesel spilt after lorry overturns



Emergency services were called to the Gledrid roundabout near Oswestry to deal with the overturned lorry. Photo: Phil Hughes.

A MAIN road near Oswestry was closed after a lorry overturned, shedding its load of cheese and spilling 80 gallons of diesel on to the carriageway.

Traffic was slow on the A5 near Chirk, between the A483 and B5070, after the 42-tonne lorry overturned on Tuesday night last week on the Gledrid roundabout.

The cheese had to be removed and police officers were on the scene arranging the re-

covery of the lorry. A fire crew from Oswestry was sent to the scene at 9.30pm after the lorry overturned, to deal with fuel spillage.

A spokesman for Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service said: “The fire crew used environmental packs and small gear to deal with the fuel spillage.

“We left the site at 11.22pm.”

The driver was assessed by the ambulance service.

Claire Brown, spokeswoman for West Midlands Ambulance Service, said the driver was assessed and he had only suffered minor injuries and did not require hospital treatment.

She said: “We were called by the police just after 9.30pm to Gledrid roundabout on the A5 to reports of a lorry which had overturned believed to be carrying cheese.

“The driver managed to self-extricate from the cab.”

We are still open for business, says owner of wine store

A WINE shop owner has insisted his store is still open despite reports claiming it has closed down.

Neil Jenkins, who owns Twelve Green Bottles in Leg Street in Oswestry has been quick to remind customers that the store, which sells a vast array of wines, is still open for business, despite claims stating otherwise.

Mr Jenkins opened the shop back in September 2014.

The businessman made a decision in November to close the door of the shop, but not stop

the business operating from its Leg Street base in the town.

Customers in the area can still order wine, he said.

He explained customers can ring the bell and a member of staff will assist them.

Mr Jenkins said: “I was baffled to see people had said we have closed, but I can reassure people that we are not closed and we are still open for business.

“What we decided last year was that we needed to concentrate on our website, and

needed more time to do it, and didn’t have that time when we were operating the shop.

“However, we still have customers ordering in, we actually had one from Oswestry yesterday, and people can come to the door and order their wine.

“But what I can assure people is that we have not closed at all.”

The shop supplies vintage and award-winning wine to customers all over the country, and its online base has been growing.

Mr Jenkins reported that January was a

hugely successful month for the business, as was November and December.

He added: “January for some people isn’t great, but for us it has been.

“Our online presence has been really good, we sell all over the country, but we also sell a lot locally.

“The public can still get their quality wines in Oswestry, but we have to sell to all over the country.

“So the message is we are still very much open here in Oswestry.”

Chief reflects on first 12 months in role and pays tribute to commitment of officers

IT has been a demanding year for Dyfed-Powys Police and especially for the man who took on the task of running the force.

Chief Constable Mark Collins has been in the role just over 12 months.

And things are vastly different from when he took over.

The service was deemed by the inspectorate to be in need of improvement across all areas of business.

There was sliding victim satisfaction results, a workforce feeling the pressure of cost cutting programmes, shrinking numbers and fast changing demand.

However, a year on and things have improved, with the force receiving a good rating in their latest inspectorate.

Report by Jonny Drury

Reflecting on the last 12 months, the chief constable said: "I was so proud to return to Dyfed-Powys Police.

"I was very clear that to begin the turnaround the inspectorate had identified was needed and, most importantly our workforce was telling us they wanted to see, I needed to get out amongst our officers and staff.

Hear

"I needed to hear, see and feel what had changed.

"The communities we serve are the safest nationally and, the likelihood of offenders being

brought to justice here is amongst the highest nationally.

"What else was going on?

"What had changed?

"What I saw and heard about were dedicated teams of people trying to do the best they could, but in very challenging circumstances.

"Two cost saving and restructure programmes had seen many resources stripped back, with officers and staff working to deliver an equivalent service, with growing demands."

Working alongside Police and Crime Commissioner Dafydd Llywelyn, Chief Constable Collins went about making changes including setting up the witness care service Goleudy.

He also implemented a number of different things across the force, including the Rural-

Watch Facebook group, and ways of tackling other areas including street level intelligence, distribution of drugs, and work to investigate child sexual exploitation online. He praised the work of officers on the ground, and the commitment they have shown to rural areas.

Commitment

He added: "What has stood out for me during my first year is the dedication and commitment our officers, staff and volunteers have for the communities they serve.

"Policing is a challenging profession and to see report after report saying the force requires improvement, along with an ever-changing shift in demand and a change in leadership at the top, hasn't been easy for them."

Cost of damage to police cars revealed in new survey

Report by Jonny Drury

MORE than £40,000 of damage has been caused to police cars owned by the force covering Mid Wales.

In total three police forces in Wales had to stump up £3.5 million over four years due to cars damaged by crashes and driver error.

From April 2013 to April 2017, more than 4,200 incidents saw vehicles damaged by officers, animals and criminals.

The highest number, 500, were damaged by reversing, while 108 were damaged by animals, and 29 needed fixing after problems with the weather.

In Dyfed-Powys, 45 cars were damaged when officers hit either animals or birds, and 60 collided with a bollard or a post, with damaged to 91 caused by a "third party".

The value of the damage was given as £47,000.

South Wales Police racked up a bill of £2.6 million for damaged cars, with 27 vehicles left written off.

Lowest

North Wales Police had the lowest bill of £400,000, after 1,339 incidents saw vehicles damaged, including one in April 2016 when officers used a police car to run over and kill a dog on the loose on the A55.

Among the statistics, data showed blue lights were knocked off, windscreens cracked and cell doors broken.

James Price, campaign manager at the Tax-Payers' Alliance, said the police should have a "long hard look at the way they treat their cars".

He said: "The police are constantly asking for more money, but clearly they have been wasting our cash by driving recklessly and not respecting the equipment that taxpayers have funded."

A Dyfed-Powys Police spokesperson said each year the force reviews changes and lessons that can be learned.

A spokesperson said: "Each incident is reviewed to identify if there are any lessons to be learned and where necessary proportionate action is taken in cases where an officer or police staff member has been responsible for causing the damage."

Huw Jones of North Wales Police's fleet management said half of the vehicles involved in incidents with animals only needed safety checks and had no damage.

Repair work to bridge starts following crash



The accident on the Chirk bypass in June. The repair work has now started and will last until March, road bosses say.

SAFETY barriers are being replaced on a road bridge near Oswestry seven months after they were damaged in a crash.

Temporary barriers and a speed limit have been in place on the A483/A5 Chirk bypass since a crash in June when a car came perilously close to plunging hundreds of feet off the bridge into the River Ceiriog below.

Specialist highway contractors struggled to source replacement barriers because stockpiles

had been pressed into use in London terror attacks in the summer.

Work started on replacing the barriers on the busy trunk road between the Gledrid and Halton roundabouts on Monday and will last until March 21. The roadworks will see the safety barriers upgraded to bring them up to scratch with the latest standards and aim to make the road safer.

Contractor, the North and Mid Wales Trunk

Road Agency, said the width of the road will be narrowed during the works and there will be a 40 mile an hour speed limit.

There will also be some overnight road closures with traffic diverted through the town of Chirk. Any abnormal loads will be escorted across the bridge which the agent said may cause minor delays. The bypass is a bottleneck on the A483, one of the main arterial roads through Wales.

County has largest number of substandard bridges

POWYS has the largest number of substandard bridges in Wales.

The county has weight restrictions on 62 of its 1,336 bridges, the same number as Carmarthenshire.

Its head of highways says that as the largest in Wales the county has significantly more than other Welsh councils to maintain and the number of those sub-standard is the same as the previous year.

Across the UK the number of council-owned road bridges deemed substandard rose by

seven per cent in the last year, new figures show. Some 3,441 bridges in Britain were not fit to support the heaviest lorries in 2016/17, according to motoring research charity RAC Foundation.

This represents around one in every 22 of the 74,000 bridges on the local road network and is up from 3,203 the previous year.

Many of these structures have weight restrictions and others are under programmes of increased monitoring or managed decline. Nigel Brinn, Powys County Council's head of high-

ways, transport and recycling, said: "Bridges are an essential component to the highway network which we have a duty to maintain in a safe condition. As the largest county in Wales, Powys has over 5,000km of roads and 1,336 bridges, significantly more than other Welsh councils.

"Bridges that fail an assessment for carrying 44 tonne vehicles are managed in a number of ways to ensure the safety of the user. Weight limits are used to reduce the effects of loading and help preserve structures for the fu-

ture. Bridges categorised as sub-standard can include those that were built to earlier design standards or those that have deteriorated with age."

He said that the decision for implementing a weight limit was not taken lightly.

He said: "The rate of deterioration of a bridge is assessed alongside the failure mechanisms and the consequence of failure. These factors are balanced against the cost and viability of strengthening works as well as the traffic flows over the structure."

Bees can look forward to a buzzing future

BEES in Shropshire are set for a buzzing future thanks to money raised through Shropshire Council's new countryside membership scheme

Launched in December 2016, the Shropshire's Great Outdoors has membership fees that go to the maintenance of Shropshire Council's countryside parks and sites.

Now, the money raised in the first year of the scheme is to be used to improve and enhance the Bee Metropolis that sits alongside The Mere at Ellesmere and provides a home to solitary bees and other invertebrates.

The planned work includes enhanced wildflower beds and new information boards showing types of British bees and the food plants they require to survive. It will be carried out in early summer and the start of work will be marked with a special bee-themed day of events and activities at the site, including a bee safari run by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

Shaun Burkey, country parks and sites officer with Shropshire Council, said: "The Bee Metropolis was created for our bees which, as we know, are suffering terribly due to a number of factors including pesticides and a lack of nectar-rich flowering plants. When three beech trees became diseased and had to be felled we decided to create the Bee Metropolis."

Businessman looks to host a Brexit party

A LEADING Shropshire businessman is putting the wheels in motion for a Brexit party in 2019.

Clive Knowles, chairman of the British Ironwork Centre at Aston near Oswestry, says the move to host a party for the community is not a political one but one to celebrate a future Britain.

He is hoping that schools and organisations for the young will take up the invitation to join in the Shropshire Brexit Party that he is planning.

His Brexit part is earmarked for March 29, 2019.

Mr Knowles is sending out a questionnaire to more than 500 community groups across the county to find out what they would like to see at the ironwork centre just outside Oswestry on the day.

He is also looking for volunteers to get involved.

Mr Knowles said: "Whether or not you voted for Brexit, Great Britain will wake up a different entity on March 29 2019.

"I simply want to celebrate this country and try to make sure we enter this new phase with a smile on our faces and a determination to make it work. I am very patriotic."

Anyone interested can contact the centre at www.britishironworkcentre.co.uk.

Midnight cycle date is revealed

A MIDNIGHT cycle ride in which participants can watch the sun rise over the coast is being held again in June.

The Midnight Ride based in Oswestry sees cyclists embark on an 85-mile route through Shropshire and Mid Wales, finishing on the Welsh coast.

This year's event, on June 23, will continue to raise funds for the Severn Hospice.

The 2018 event, organised by Oswestry cyclist Alan Lewis, will begin a new partnership with Wrexham-based Tweaks Cycles.

Mr Lewis founded the event in 2015 and it has grown each year since its inception.

He is a talented cyclist and has been a member of the British Triathlon, Team GB squad.

He says it is aiming to expand and attract more cyclists.

"I'm excited to be working with Tweaks. By working together, we're aiming to secure the event for future years and attract more, avid riders.

"We'll also continue to support the local charity Severn Hospice, who I have raised money for the last 10 or so years," he added.

Anyone wanting more information should contact the Facebook page, Tweaks Cycles Midnight Ride.

18 Programme will help out villages' firms

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, February 1, 2018

A PROGRAMME of free support for businesses and enterprise based in the villages of Weston Rhyn, St Martins and Gobowen near Oswestry has been launched.

The programme is funded by the Three Parishes Big Local £1million Big Lottery investment programme.

The Three Parishes Means Business initiative aims to help local businesses access the support that they need to grow and thrive. Maggie Rowlands, Three Parishes Big Local Partnership member, said: "We hope that many local businesses and organisations, both large and small, will benefit from this project which includes small grants and loans, promotion of local businesses, encouraging residents to support local businesses, and training.

"We are also keen to hear from local businesses about any other ways that our Big Lottery funding can be used to support them."

Training courses planned for early 2018 include a HR focused course looking at first steps in employing people, the apprenticeship levy and staff engagement. There will also be a course explaining the upcoming changes in data protection law, and a start-up course for new or young businesses.

Contact Bridget Laraway at Qube on (01691) 656882 for more details.

Apprentice scheme will be expanded

A MID Wales engineering company is set to extend its apprenticeship scheme.

Welshpool's Dawson Shanahan, which specialises in cold forming and CNC machining, already has nine apprentices.

Bosses say the firm will add four more apprentices this summer.

The recruitment process will start at a company open day in February, with the scheme leading to a variety of qualifications.

Ken Toop, senior process development engineer at Dawson Shanahan said: "It encourages local schools to see us as a preferred employer.

"It's a good way to promote engineering in the area and it helps us source the various skills that will further enhance our operations."

In their first year, apprentices spend three days a week at college.

In their second year this drops to one day, as they spend more time in different departments and in the company's training school learning key theory.

Further information about the company and the apprenticeship scheme and open day is available at its website.

The website can be found at www.dawson-shanahan.co.uk/engineering-apprentice

Concern voiced over homes plan

A RESIDENT living close to a proposed development of 150 homes believes the area is being spoilt by over-development.

Jennings Estates Ltd has applied for permission to develop on land south of Middleton Road in Oswestry.

Theresa Williams, who lives in Heritage Park, said: "Somehow developers these days do not take into consideration the amount of extra vehicles that come with these developments.

"The existing Heritage Park development has major parking issues, cars parked on pavements, too close to junctions and all to accommodate large areas of public open space which is poorly maintained.

"We need driveways and good gardens for family homes and not parking for one vehicle and a postage stamp garden.

"This lane is being spoilt by verges being destroyed by over use and vast amounts of discarded rubbish discarded from vehicles. More consultation needs to be had before any more homes are built in this area of Oswestry."

In the outline planning application, consultants say the developer is simply seeking a means of access into the land at present although the reports says it is envisaged that homes will be similar to those already in the Middleton Road area.

Unemployment figure on the increase in region for the first time in several months

Report by James Pugh

was up 30 from last month's figure, leaving the Mid Wales county with a claimant rate of 0.9 per cent.

In the wider West Midlands, unemployment was up 6,000 to 155,000 on the figure for June to August 2017.

Compared to the same September to November quarter in 2016 the regional unemployment figure was down 6,000.

Nationally, the number of people in work has reached a record high amid strong demand for workers, although the real value of pay continues to decline.

Gareth Niblett, Job Centre customer services

manager for Shropshire, said: "It has been a mixed bag with unemployment up in Shropshire and down in Telford.

"But the figures are positive for young people aged between 18 and 24 in the county. In Telford unemployment among young people has dropped by 40 down to 475, while in Shropshire the number has dropped by 15 also to 475.

"There is no real reason for the overall increase in unemployment. But it is the time of year when people have finished temporary seasonal work. We are doing a lot of work with Telford College and Telford & Wrekin Council, and are organising a construction careers event.

"Lidl is building a new store in Shrewsbury and there are 20 vacancies.

"We have also been working with Telford

College on an HGV driver course. Twenty-two customers have started and hopefully after they have got their HGV licence we will be able to match them up with employers."

There were just over 32.2 million people in employment in the three months to November, an increase of 102,000 on the previous quarter and the biggest total since records began in 1971.

The UK's employment rate is now at a joint record high of 75.3 per cent, reported the ONS. Unemployment fell by 3,000 to 1.44 million, which is 160,000 lower than a year ago.

The claimant count, which includes people on Jobseeker's Allowance and the unemployment element of Universal Credit, increased by 8,600 last month to 832,500.

Town's bosses are 'cautiously optimistic' about the future

Report by Jonny Drury

BUSINESSES in Oswestry are "cautiously optimistic" about the economy in 2018 according to a legal expert at one of Shropshire's largest law firms.

Lanyon Bowdler, which has offices in Church Street, Oswestry, assists businesses with commercial property, corporate transactions, commercial contracts and employment law amongst other professional services.

By working closely with businesses of all shapes and sizes, their lawyers have a unique insight into how business owners view the state of the local economy, as well as being able to take a wider view based on businesses' activities.

Brian Evans, managing partner at Lanyon Bowdler, said the past year had been dominated by politics, much like 2016 was before it.

Political

He said despite the political uncertainty, businesses in Oswestry remained optimistic and were keen to progress their business.

He said: "Although businesses in Shropshire are not always directly affected by politics, the national picture does tend to affect their confidence about future prospects," he said.

"The natural reaction when things are uncertain is to stay put and not take any business risks, such as expanding or taking on new staff.

"While that has been the case for some, we are seeing an increasing number of businesses beginning to move forward despite the political uncertainty.

"I would say the general mood is cautiously optimistic.

"The local economy is in pretty good shape and we have assisted numerous businesses with moves to bigger premises or expansion into overseas markets – both in Oswestry and across Shropshire and beyond.

"I think it will be a similar picture as we move into 2018.

"We will all have an eye on the political situation but the best thing businesses can do is carry on putting their best foot forward whatever may be going on in Brussels or Westminster."

Brian said Lanyon Bowdler had enjoyed a busy year as a firm, with corporate transactional work, planning and employment law among many departments seeing significant growth.

Unsung heroes up for a host of awards



The nominees from Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital who are hoping for success in the national Unsung Hero Awards

A HOSPITAL has been shortlisted seven times in the national Unsung Hero Awards.

Five individuals and two teams from Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital are up for prizes after being nominated by colleagues and patients for going above and beyond their call of duty.

The Unsung Hero Awards, hosted by GoTo-JobBoard, celebrate the hard work non-clinical NHS staff and volunteers do.

Winners will be unveiled in a glittering ceremony at The Principle Hotel in Manchester on February 23, and a large delegation of or-

thopaedic hospital finalists and supporters will be attending.

Charlotte Perkins, research study support officer, has been shortlisted in the admin and clerical leader of the year award. She was nominated by her colleague Lisa Burgess-Collins, research administration assistant.

The Midland Centre for Spinal Injuries medical secretaries and administration team is up for the admin and clerical team of the year award. Kate Betts, physiotherapy technical instructor, nominated the team.

Kate also nominated the MCSI domestic

team, who have got through in the ancillary staff team of the year category.

Heather Edwards, business manager assistant, and Daphne Evans, League of Friends volunteer, were both nominated by Rebecca Warren, MCSI ward manager, in the lifetime service award and volunteer of the year category respectively. Arthritis Research Centre housekeeping assistant Steven Burke has been shortlisted in the ancillary staff everyday hero award. Patient Sian Griffiths nominated medical secretary Jane Nicolls for the patient choice award.

Post Office chiefs in talks about banking services

LOCAL politicians have met senior Post Office officials to discuss banking services in Mid Wales.

Russell George, Assembly Member for Montgomeryshire, invited Post Office management to meet with him after a series of banking closures across Powys in recent years.

The meeting, which took place at Llanidloes Town Council offices, follows the recent closure of the town's Barclays branch, which until recently was the only remaining bank in the town.

Following the meeting, Mr George said: "I was pleased that senior Post Office management agreed to come to Mid Wales to discuss the banking services which it can offer to fill the gap which has been left by the closure of bank branches across North Powys.

"We have seen high street bank branches close right across Montgomeryshire and I was pleased that Llanidloes Town Council were also involved in this positive meeting, at which the Post Office outlined the services which it provides.

"While I acknowledge that the Post Office is unable to offer all of the services which a bank provides, the Post Office offers more services than people realise from processing bill payments, ordering foreign currency and even dealing with personal and business banking transactions of virtually all banks.

"It's often unnecessary for people to travel many miles past the nearest post office to the nearest bank and with convenient opening hours.

"Using the Post Office as a one stop shop

could also make local Post Offices more sustainable and I was pleased that Post Office management committed to looking at what other services it may be able to provide in the future.

"They also agreed to look at concerns relating to confidentiality, queuing, staffing hours and signage especially when Post Office facilities are housed in convenience stores such as in the Spar in Llanidloes. I would also like to thank Llanidloes Town Council for taking part in this positive meeting."

Three bedroomed detached home is set on a large plot

In a sought after location found down a private driveway, Dunvegan at Knockin is a spacious three bedroomed detached bungalow set on a large plot.

It is for sale through Town & Country at £340,000 with no chain. The accommodation briefly comprises of a large hallway, lounge, kitchen, conservatory, three good sized bedrooms and bathroom. Outside the property benefits from a large driveway with parking for six vehicles, a double garage and attractive rear and side gardens with mature shrubs. The property is warmed by oil fired central heating and benefits from double glazing throughout. Located in the village of Knockin, this is just eight miles from Oswestry and 13 miles from Shrewsbury. In more detail the entrance hallway has coved ceiling, storage cupboards and airing cupboard and loft access. The lounge has two windows to the front, a brick fireplace with a quarry tiled hearth, an open working fire with a brass canopy over and patio doors leading to the conservatory.

The kitchen has base and wall kitchen units in oak with work surfaces over, tiled flooring, plumbing for a washing machine, space for a fridge, a Trianco oil fired boiler, a window to the rear and a glazed door to the rear leading into the conservatory. The conservatory has tiled flooring and double doors opening to the garden.

Bedroom one has a side window, fitted wardrobes and drawers, and a shower cubicle with an electric shower. Bedroom two has a rear window and built-in wardrobes. The third bedroom has a window to the front. Having a three piece suite, the bathroom includes a panelled bath, a WC and a wash hand basin, a window to the side and vinyl flooring. The double garage has two up and over doors and eaves storage and a door to the side. To the front of the property is a gravelled driveway leading to block paved parking, shrubbed beds and a covered canopy porch leading to the front door. The rear and side gardens are a good size and extend right around the property. A paved pathway runs around the bungalow with extensive lawned and shrubbed gardens and a patio area, all enclosed by walling and fencing.

KEY FEATURES

- Spacious detached bungalow
- Three bedrooms
- Large plot & private driveway
- Private setting.
- Parking for six cars

KNOCKIN £340,000



TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Town & Country

TEL: 01691 679631

EMAIL: sales@townandcountryoswestry.com



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Property sits in a most attractive rural location

WYKEY, RUYTON-XI-TOWNS
£525,000

Stone House occupies a most attractive rural location on the outskirts of the small hamlet of Wykey approximately one mile from Ruyton-Xi-Towns with its local facilities.

The property, understood to date back to the early 19th century, is constructed of sandstone and part rendered under a slated roof. It has a garden and approximately three and a half acres of land.

The property is for sale through JJ Dell & Co with a guide price of £525,000. Accommodation comprises an entrance lobby, sitting room, dining room, conservatory, kitchen, inner hallway, study/bedroom, rear entrance and shower room.

There are four bedrooms and a bathroom.

Contact JJ Dell & Co on 01691 653437 and 680212.



Property is spacious and in much sought after area

ST MARTINS
£369,950

<<<

A desirable and spacious five bedroom detached family home, Inch Murrin in St Martins, is in a much sought after area.

It is on the market through Town and Country for £369,950 and there is no chain. Local part exchange would be considered. The property is a magnificent family residence which has been built to a high specification throughout and benefits from entrance hall, cloakroom, office/sitting room, lounge, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, utility room, two master bedrooms with en-suite and a further three bedrooms and family bathroom.

Viewing is highly recommended to appreciate this beautiful property.

For more details contact Town and Country on 01691 679631.

J. J. DELL & Co.

CHARTERED SURVEYORS

GOBOWEN



- Modern Semi-Detached House Convenient For Village Facilities
- GFCH & PVC DG
- Entrance Hall
- Living Room
- Dining Room
- Conservatory
- Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Garage And Ample Parking
- Cul-De-Sac Location
- EPC Band - E
- JJD992

GUIDE PRICE £144,950

WHITTINGTON



- Three Bed. Semi-Detached Village Cottage
- Quiet Road Location
- GFCH & DG
- Kitchen And Utility
- Dining Room And Sitting Room
- Sun Room
- Bathroom And Shower Room
- Ample Car Parking. Workshop
- Award Winning Side/Rear Garden
- EPC Band - E
- JJD977

GUIDE PRICE £275,000

LLANGYNOG



- Spacious Detached Dormer House
- Views Overlooking The Valley
- OFCH & DG
- Reception Hall
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Living Room & Dining Room
- Cloakroom & Utility
- Four Bedrooms (Master En Suite)
- Paddock - In All Approx. 2 Acres
- EPC Band - E
- JJD973

GUIDE PRICE £450,000

OVERTON ROAD, NR. ST. MARTINS



- Spacious Detached Character Cottage
- Set Within Extensive Grounds
- Reception Hall
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Utility And Cloakroom
- Large Living Room
- Four Bedrooms (One En-Suite)
- Parking For Up To 6 Cars
- Large Garage
- Workshop/Annex
- EPC Band - F
- JJD953

GUIDE PRICE £410,000

GOBOWEN



- Close Care Residential Bungalow
- Minimum Age 55 Years
- Attractive Purpose Built Complex
- CH & DG
- Lounge/Dining Area
- Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Two Bedrooms
- Rear Enclosed Yard And Garage
- Short Walking Distance From Office
- EPC Band - F
- JJD887

GUIDE PRICE £89,950

GOBOWEN



- Close Care Residential Bungalow On Attractive Purpose-Built Complex
- Minimum Age 55 Years
- Semi-Rural Location
- CH & DG
- Kitchen
- Large Lounge/Dining Area
- Conservatory
- Two Bedrooms
- Bathroom & Cloakroom
- Integral Garage
- Short Walking Distance From Office
- EPC Band - E
- JJD982

GUIDE PRICE £104,950

WESTON, NR. OSWESTRY



- Grade II Listed Semi-Detached Property
- CH & DG
- Reception Hall
- Study Area
- Cloakroom
- Lounge
- Modern Dining Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Garden
- Parking
- EPC Band - C
- JJD984

GUIDE PRICE £225,000

RHOS-Y-GADFA, NR. GOBOWEN - TO LET



- Semi-Detached Country Cottage
- Attractive Rural Location
- OFCH & UPVC DG
- Modern Kitchen With Utility
- Living Room
- Three Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Good Sized Garden Plot
- EPC Band - E
- Rent £575 pcm.
- Deposit £575
- Agreement £180 pcm
- JJD0079

RENT £575 PCM

OSWESTRY - TO LET



- Town Centre Maisonette Providing Spacious Accommodation
- Reception Hall
- Lounge
- Dining Area
- Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Security Entrance
- EPC Band - E
- Rent £425 pcm. Deposit £425
- Agreement Cost £180 inc. VAT
- JJD076

RENT £425 PCM

OSWESTRY - TO LET



- One Bedroomed Flat Convenient For Town Centre
- Shared Entrance Lobby
- Landing
- Sitting Room
- Dining Kitchen
- Bedroom
- Bathroom
- Car Parking Available
- EPC Band - D
- Rent £375 PCM.
- Deposit £375
- Agreement £180.
- JJD0068

RENT £375 PCM

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- Open Views Across Surrounding Countryside
- We understand Mains Electricity And Water Available
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£445,000

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- Parking
- OFCH
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- Unit G - RENT £23,000 (Floor Area - 8,400 sq. ft)
- EPC Band - E
- JJD087

£19,000 & £23,000

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Oswestry **£119,950**

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NEW

St Martins **Offers in the region of £129,950**

THREE BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE IN NEED OF MODERNISATION.



NEW

Llanymynech **£129,950**

A SPACIOUS PERIOD PROPERTY WITH FOUR BEDROOMS AND GARAGE.



NEW

Baschurch **£199,995**

A TWO BEDROOM DETACHED BUNGALOW IN NEED OF UPDATING.



NEW

Ruyton Xi Towns **£210,000**

A SEMI DETACHED FAMILY HOME IN A MOST SOUGHT AFTER VILLAGE WITH A REAR GARDEN EXTENDING OVER 120 FEET LONG.



REDUCED

Oswestry **Offers in the region of £215,000**

A FOUR BEDROOM SEMI-DETACHED FAMILY HOME SITUATED IN A SOUGHT AFTER LOCATION OVERLOOKING BRYNHAFOD PLAYING FIELD.



NEW

Oswestry **£255,000**

SPACIOUS THREE BEDROOM DETACHED BUNGALOW LOCATED IN SOUGHT AFTER AREA.



REDUCED

Llansantffraid **£280,000**

A SPACIOUS THREE/FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED DORMER BUNGALOW IN NEED OF SOME UPDATING, SET IN 1/2 ACRE.



Oswestry **Offers in the region of £329,950**

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REDUCED

Knockin **Offers in the region of £320,000**

A SPACIOUS THREE BEDROOM DETACHED BUNGALOW set in a LARGE PLOT, DOWN A PRIVATE DRIVEWAY, IN A SOUGHT AFTER LOCATION.



NEW

Glyn Ceiriog **£399,950**

A FOUR/FIVE BEDROOM, DETACHED RURAL PROPERTY WITH FANTASTIC VIEWS.



REDUCED

Moelfre **£595,000**

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Detached home enjoys superb rural views

MOELFRE
£595,000

Town and Country Oswestry are delighted to offer to the market Y Dafarn, Moelfre – a highly desirable and attractive four bedroom detached family home with outstanding countryside views and overlooking Moelfre Lake.

It is on the market with no chain and an asking price of £595,000. It is a perfect country retreat away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The property sits within three acres of fields and gardens.

Accommodation briefly comprises a reception room, living room, shower room, kitchen/breakfast room, laundry, orangery, study, master bedroom with en-suite, three further bedrooms and bathroom.

Contact Town and Country on 01691 679631 for more details.



Semi-detached home dates from the 1830s

KNOCKIN HEATH
£220,000 <<<

An attractive semi-detached residence believed to date from the 1830s, 2 Sandstone Cottages, Knockin Heath, Oswestry, is for sale through Morris Marshall & Poole at £220,000.

The property is set in a small rural community with good road links to the county town of Shrewsbury.

The extended ground floor accommodation includes a porch, a lounge, a kitchen/dining room and a shower room. Upstairs there are two bedrooms.

Outside, twin timber gates open off the roadway to the front garden area. There is ample parking and an outbuilding in the rear garden.

For more details about the property and to book a viewing, contact Morris Marshall & Poole on 01691 679595.

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Roger Lunt FRICS FNAEA FARLA



17 Marshfields, Maesbury Marsh

£137,500

Well presented two bedroom semi-detached bungalow. The Montgomery Canal is just minutes away from the house. Off road driveway parking, double glazed, oil c/heating and log burner in the lounge. EPC Rating = 62(D)



Oswestry Office 01691 679595



14 Queens Road, Oswestry

£220,000

Large period terrace house with five bedrooms arranged over three floors, plus useable cellars. Set in an established residential street within the town centre convenient for local amenities, schools, shops and supermarkets. Gas central heating. Garden to rear. For sale with no upward chain. EPC Rating = 55(D)

Oswestry Office 01691 679595



23 Weston Road, Morda

●●● Last Remaining Plot Available ●●●
£179,950
 BRAND NEW HOME 3 bedroom detached house with garage, garden and parking. Located on the edge of the village. The photograph shows a similar house on Oakwood Grange under construction. Anticipated completion early spring.

Oswestry Office 01691 679595



Bryn Awel, Middleton Rd, Oswestry

£210,000

Detached family house. Two receptions, kitchen/breakfast, g/ floor shower. Three bedrooms and family bathroom. Gas-fired central heating, double glazing. Ample off road parking, detached workshop. EPC Rating = 45(E).

Oswestry Office 01691 679595

4 Offa Drive, Oswestry

£139,950

Improved 3 bedroom semi-det house. Convenient town centre location. Quite street with garden and driveway parking. Double glazing and gas heating. Smart fitted kitchen / dining room and contemporary bathroom. No upward chain. EPC Rating = 66(D)

Oswestry Office 01691 679595



RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES TO LET

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2 Bed 2nd/F Flat, Elect H/FTE, No Pets, (EPC = 32) (£395 dep)	£295 pcm
1 Bed 2nd/Floor Flat, Gas C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC = 67) (£495 dep)	£310 pcm
1st/Floor Apart, Gas C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=34) (£495 dep)	£395 pcm
2 Bed Semi-Det, Gas C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=68) (£570 dep)	£470 pcm
2 Bed Semi-Det, Gas C/H, FTE, No Pets (EPC=57) (£595 dep)	£495 pcm
2 Bed Semi-Det, Gas C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=67) (£595 dep)	£495 pcm
2 Bed Furnished Flat, Elect/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=6) (£800 dep)	£525 pcm

MORDA

3 Bed Semi-Det, Gas C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=74) (£720 dep)	£620 pcm
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LLANYMYNECH

3 Bed Semi-Det, Oil C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=Exempt)(£750 dep)	£650 pcm
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LLANSANTFFRAID

3 Bed-Det Barn Conversion, Oil C/H, FTE, No Pets, (EPC=77) (£695 dep)	£595 pcm
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 Tywyn 01654 710388

 Rhayader 01597 739994
 Welshpool 01938 554818
 Aberdyfi (window display)



Stunning Grade II farmhouse enjoys superb views

LLANRHAEADR
£450,000

Clynog, Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant near Oswestry is a stunning Grade II listed farmhouse in an elevated position with outstanding views over the Tanat Valley.

It is for sale through Bowen Son & Watson at £450,000. The property is situated on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant close to the confluence of the rivers Tanat and Rhaeadr in the stunning Berwyn Mountains and near Pistyll Rhaeadr.

In brief, the property has a reception hall, music room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen lounge, kitchen, utility room, rear lobby, coal house, gallery landing, a loft storage room, integral garage, gun room, five first floor bedrooms, a family bathroom, five attic rooms, large gardens and an orchard/paddock.



Originally forming part of the Wynnstay Estate, the property has an attractive 19th century frontage with an earlier farmhouse now serving as its rear wing. The property has remained in the current owner's family for over 100 years and this sale therefore offers a unique opportunity to purchase one of the area's most historic homes.

Clynog is approached over a well-maintained driveway which is owned by the property with original iron carriage and walking gates leading onto the courtyard with adjoining lawned area which provides access to the property and ample parking.

The agents have been informed it is Grade II Listed and substantial repairs were made to the roof around seven years ago.

Contact Bowen Son & Watson on 01691 652367.



Well located property in hamlet comes with cottage

LLANGEDWYN
£229,950 >>>

Well located in the small hamlet of Pentre Felin in the Tanat Valley, 2 Glanrafon Cottages, Pentre Felin, Llangedwyn, comes with an attached single bedroom cottage subject to a protected tenancy, known as Number 1.

Coming with good sized gardens, a range of detached outbuildings and having scope for improvement, it is for sale through Morris Marshall & Poole at £229,950.

The main drive approach off the access lane passes by a range of brick/stone and slate roofed detached stores providing ample storage.

A small section is included with No1 Glanrafon Cottages, and is therefore subject to the protected tenancy status.

Contact Morris Marshall & Poole on 01691 679595 for more details about the property and to arrange a viewing.



Historic mill still retains many of its endearing features

ABERBECHAN
£345,000 <<<

Totally flexible accommodation and hugely authentic credentials are among the endearing features of Minhafren Mill in Aberbechan.

For sale through Balfours at offers over £345,000, the property sits some seven miles from Montgomery and is within easy reach of Welshpool and Shrewsbury. Minhafren Mill comprises a black and white timbered two-bedroomed cottage, together with an adjoining two-bedroomed barn conversion with a self-contained annexe.

Dating from the early 17th century, this black and white half-timbered property became a fulling mill in the 19th century, utilising the Bechan brook and adjacent canal for the manufacture and transport of goods. Today the waterways simply add an additional layer of rural idyll and charm.

Contact Balfours on 01743 353511.



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**Epsom Close
Oswestry** £135,000

- A well presented 2 bedroom semi-detached house
- Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen
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- An enclosed rear garden mainly laid to lawn
- With paved patio area and shrub borders
- Driveway to the side providing ample off road parking
- Gas Fired Central Heating
- UPVC double glazing. EPC Rating C



**Upper Brook Street
Oswestry** £104,995

- NO CHAIN
- A well presented two bedroom mid terraced property
- Situated on the fringe of the town centre
- Lounge, Kitchen,
- Two Bedrooms and Bathroom
- Rear Garden with Shed
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**Moors Bank
St Martins** £155,000

- A well presented three bedroom semi detached house
- Situated in the popular village of St Martins with a wide range of amenities
- Easy access onto the A5/A483 is also available from the village.
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Conservatory,
- Kitchen, Dining Room, Cloakroom
- Three Bedrooms and Family bathroom
- Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking
- Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing
- EPC Rating E (43)



**Abraham Court
Oswestry** £79,995

- This beautifully appointed ground floor purpose built apartment
- House Manager with Carline backup ensuring help 24 hours a day
- Camera controlled entry phone system
- Sealed unit D/G & night storage heating
- Resident's lounge & Guest suite with en-suite facilities



**Trefonen Road
Morda** £270,000

- An immaculately presented 3 bedroom detached family home
- Set on the edge of the popular village of Morda
- Outstanding views to the rear over open countryside.
- The property has been extended and tastefully renovated throughout
- Entrance Hall, Shower Room/Utility, Kitchen/Diner, Lounge
- 3 Bedrooms, family bathroom
- uPVC Double Glazing and Gas C/H. EPC Rating C (74)
- Garage and gardens with views to rear.



Llansantffraid £279,950

- NO CHAIN
- A traditional 3 bedroom detached black and white stone cottage
- Set on the outskirts of the popular village of Llansantffraid
- Half an acre of land and is surrounded by open countryside
- Entrance Hall, Kitchen/Dining Area,
- Living/Dining Room
- Conservatory, Sitting/Family Room, Garden Room and Shower Room
- 3 Bedrooms and a Family Bathroom
- Large gardens with a raised decking area, large driveway
- Summerhouse and double garage
- EPC Rating G



**Twmpath Lane
Gobowen** £330,000

- FOR SALE BY ONLINE AUCTION (UNLESS SOLD PRIOR OR WITHDRAWN)
- An interesting investment/development opportunity comprising of a row of four, 2 bedroom terrace houses
- The four cottages sit on a generous size plot (approx. 0.32 acre)
- Offering ample off road parking and gardens to the rear.
- The cottages offer spacious living accommodation each comprising:
- Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, 2 Bedrooms and Bathroom
- Gas central heating and UPVC D/G throughout all of cottages.



Minshall Place £84,995

- NO CHAIN
- Spacious and well maintained Leasehold 2 Bedroom First Floor Apartment
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms and Bathroom
- Rear garden laid mainly to lawn



**Hillside
Oswestry** £104,995

- A rare opportunity to purchase a 3 bedroom semi-detached house
- The property requires modernization throughout.
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge
- Kitchen and Dining Room
- 3 Double Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- Generous sized garden, close proximity to the famous Old Hill fort
- EPC Rating G (9)
- NO CHAIN



**Morda Road
Oswestry** £325,000

- A recently modernised 3 Bedroom Detached Home
- lovely outlook across Oswestry Cricket Ground, perfect for cricket lovers.
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge, Kitchen
- Breakfast Area, Dining Room and Sun Room
- 3 good sized Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- An enclosed lawn area, with patio providing an outdoor seating area.
- Graveled driveway to front & rear
- Driveway leading to Double Garage.
- Gas C/H and UPVC Double Glazed windows



Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant £450,000

- A stunning Grade II Listed Farmhouse
- Situated in an elevated position with outstanding views over the Tanat Valley
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- Kitchen Lounge, Kitchen; Utility
- Room: Rear Lobby; Pantry
- Coal House; Gallery Landing; Loft Storage Room; Integral Garage
- Gun Room; Cellar; 5 First Floor Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom; 5 Attic Rooms
- Large Gardens; Orchard/Paddock.



**Building Plot
Chirk Bank** £74,995

- A residential plot located in the picturesque village of Chirk Bank extending to 0.04 acres or thereabouts with outline planning permission for the erection of one detached dwelling
- The site is located within walking distance of the Shropshire Union Canal and the Chirk Aqueduct



**Hawthorn Grove
Oswestry** £115,000

- A 2 Bedroom Mid-Terraced house
- Within a popular residential area
- Hall, Kitchen/Breakfast Rm, Lounge
- 2 Bedrooms and Bathroom
- enclosed rear garden laid mainly to lawn
- Paved patio area directly off the rear of the property
- Parking to the front of the property.
- UPVC Double Glazing and Gas C/H.
- EPC Rating D (56). NO CHAIN



**Morda Road
Oswestry** £375,000

- A substantial Detached 4 Bedroom Family Home
- Within walking distance of the Market Town of Oswestry
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Music Room, Office, Kitchen/Diner
- Utility, and Dining Room, Master Bedroom with En-suite
- 2nd Bedroom with En-suite, 2 further Bedrooms & Family Bathroom
- plot of 1/3 acre with front and rear gardens
- Orchard/vegetable patch, poly-tunnel and patio areas
- Driveway & Double garage with workshop.



**Hampton Road
Oswestry** £340,000

- A rare opportunity purchase a character 4/5 Bedroom Detached House
- Situated in one of Oswestry's premier locations on the outskirts of the town
- Retaining a host of period features throughout including
- Mosaic tiled flooring, fireplaces and picture rails
- Entrance Lobby, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Conservatory
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room and Shower Room
- 4/5 excellent Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- Ample off road parking and well maintained rear garden



**Regent Court
Oswestry** £110,000

- Well appointed 2 Bed 1st Flr Apartment
- Living/Dining Area, Fitted Kitchen
- 2 Bedrooms (master en-suite)
- Sep Shower Rm, Secure car parking
- 24 hour resident secretary, communal lounge & garden
- Gated off road parking
- Security entrance system
- EPC Rating C '71'



**Hampton Rise
Oswestry** £325,000

- A rare opportunity to purchase a 3 Bedroom Detached House
- Situated within a desirable established residential location
- Entrance Porch, Entrance Hall, Cloakroom
- Dining Room, Lounge, Kitchen/Breakfast Room & Utility
- 3 Bedrooms and a Family Bathroom.
- Excellent plot with mature front and rear gardens
- Driveway and single garage
- Oil central heating & Double glazing
- EPC Rating D (60)
- NO CHAIN



**Rowan Close
Gobowen** £159,995

- An well appointed 2 Bedroom Semi-Detached Bungalow
- Porch, Lounge, Kitchen, Conservatory
- 2 Bedrooms and Shower Room
- Well maintained front and rear garden
- Off road parking
- Gas C/H and hardwood D/G
- EPC Rating D (65)



**Upper Brook Street
Oswestry** £125,000

- A delightful 2 Bedroom Terraced Cottage
- Period features including beams to ceilings and inglenook fireplace
- Large rear garden (approx. 150' long), garage and workshop
- Living Room, Inner Hall/Breakfast Area, Kitchen
- Rear Lobby and Bathroom and 2 good size Bedrooms.
- Gas fired central heating. EPC Rating



**Prince Street
Oswestry** £91,995

- A well presented 2 Bedroom Mid-Terraced House
- Lounge, Dining Room and Kitchen
- 2 double Bedrooms and a Bathroom.
- Gated off road parking
- Double glazing and gas central heating
- NO CHAIN. EPC RatingD (64)



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House builders optimistic despite fears over Brexit

The construction industry in the UK overall is its least optimistic for five years amid fears over Brexit and an economic slowdown, but house builders are more optimistic, new research shows.

Some building firms won the most work for several months in December but the number of companies expecting a rise in output levels over the next 12 months was the weakest recorded since the middle of 2013, according to the Markit/Cips UK construction index.

However, the dip in the PMI appears to be largely due to falling levels of commercial work and this is offset by a growing number of house building projects. Indeed, the prospect of greater workloads led firms to take on staff and buy materials at the fastest pace in two years over December.

According to Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at consultancy Pantheon Macroeconomics, support from the Government should keep house building going in 2018, although he warned construction output overall was likely to be flat.

Overall just over a third of construction firms in the survey see an increase in activity over the course of 2018, while 11 per cent anticipate a reduction. They say they are facing strong cost pressures as a result of the weak pound and Brexit driving up the cost of importing materials.

It should not be a surprise that Brexit is having an effect on commercial and industrial output, according to Steve Mansour, chief executive officer of construction insurance specialist CRL.

He believes that when it comes to house building, developers need to provide what is wanted by buyers. "Currently, we are seeing developers build multitudes of three-bed family homes, in a bid to solve the ever evolving housing shortage. There has to be a shift this year to fit with demand, which will create more choice in the market, and respond to consumer need," he said. "Developers must start recognising this if they are to stay ahead of the game. This shouldn't mean increased property prices, it should mean a welcome change, one of bespoke or enhanced product offerings for consumers," he explained.

"Technological advancements have already improved construction and we expect this to expand this year, through processes such as modular building and 3D printing. Expect more virtual reality and augmented reality use, with potential buyers visiting the shell of a virtual house, allowing them to design and configure a truly unique home. This will mean a fit-for-purpose property, which will hopefully result in purchasers staying in their homes for longer," he pointed out.

He wants it to be a year for entrepreneurialism and further innovation in the construction industry. "Overall, the outlook for the industry is bright, but it will have its challenges. The best thing we can do is stay knowledgeable and open to new ideas and ways of working," he added.

Outlook brighter but mortgage market expected to remain flat

The outlook for the mortgage market in the UK is more optimistic than a year ago but overall activity is expected to be flat in 2018 and next year due to continued economic uncertainty, according to a new report.

But the outlook varies depending on different lending sectors with buy to let activity in particular not expected to recover this year or even in 2019. The report from UK Finance says buy to let has been weaker than expected.

It explains that several different factors are weighing on buy to let activity. Lenders tightened affordability criteria ahead of the Prudential Regulation Authority's stress tests, which came into effect at the beginning of 2017, and the tax relief changes began to take effect from April, the first stage of a four-year transition. These two changes, along with the change in stamp duty for additional homes means buy to let house activity has been flat since June 2016.

It points out that there is still uncertainty in how landlords will react to the income tax changes. "We have not seen any sudden contraction in lending as a result, but expect landlords to become more cautious and will likely limit their ability to re-leverage their portfolios," the report adds. It also points out that the housing market is in a similar position to the economy, slightly subdued, with some components holding up better than expected.

"As most housing transactions are discretionary, it is often the case that activity levels tend to bear the brunt of any uncertainty, as buyers and sellers wait to get a clearer picture of where the economy might be headed. For this reason, we expect overall activity to be fairly flat over the next two years, in part a result of the



economic uncertainty," the report adds. UK Finance does not expect house prices to fall as a lack of supply continues to prop up values. But it does forecast that house price growth will slow over the next two years and then grow in line with earnings.

"We expect to see regulated house purchase activity to grow modestly in 2018, driven wholly by first-time buyers, as home mover numbers remain flat. This is expected to continue into 2019," it says.

The forecast says that first-time buyer numbers performed better than expected over the course of 2017, helped by Government schemes, good credit availability, and competitive mortgage

rates. "We expect to see a continued recovery in first-time buyer numbers, though at a slower rate than seen over the last few years," the report says, but it adds that first-time buyers continue to face affordability issues.

Home mover activity also performed a little better than expected, but is still only likely to match levels over the past three years and activity is forecast to remain at this level over the next two years. However, remortgage activity has been stronger than expected.

Prospects for the UK economy are likely to remain more uncertain than usual for the next few years as a consequence of

Brexit. Data for the first nine months of 2017 shows that the economy has been growing at a slower pace than over the last few years, the report points out.

And it explains that while it's still not clear how Brexit will pan out, it is worth bearing in mind that the housing market is relatively well insulated than many other parts of the economy, as most activity is driven domestically.

It suggests that should Brexit negotiations adversely affect the UK economy, policymakers may well see the housing market as a way to stabilise the economy, as has been the case in the past, and are likely to take policy action accordingly.

Remortgage loan approvals hit nine-year high

Remortgage loan approvals hit a nine-year high in November, just as borrowers were experiencing the first base rate rise in over a decade, Bank of England figures show.

Some 53,922 remortgage loans were approved, marking the highest figure since October 2008, the Bank's Money and Credit report said.

The report also showed that consumers' borrowing using credit cards, personal loans and overdrafts fell back to a near two-year low in the run-up to Christmas, prompting suggestions that rising interest rates may have had a "significant psychological impact" on some potential borrowers.

The number of mortgage approvals made to home buyers also edged up month-on-month in November, to 65,139, from 64,887 in October.

This figure was still slightly below the monthly average of 66,562 over the previous six months.

The Bank of England base rate was increased from 0.25% to 0.5% in early November – the first increase in more than 10 years.

Jeremy Leaf, a north London estate agent and a former residential chairman of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Rics), said the large number of remortgage loans in the latest figures suggests borrowers were seeking to protect themselves from further potential increases in



interest rates. Discussing the housing market generally, he said: "Looking forward, we anticipate a fairly steady market in early 2018 and no great changes one way or another, with realistic vendors much more likely to do deals rather than those who are still holding out for unrealistic prices."

The annual growth rate of consumer credit – which includes borrowing using credit cards, personal loans and overdrafts – slowed to 9.1% in November, the lowest rate since December 2015.

The Bank said the weaker rate of growth in consumer credit was partly due to a particularly strong flow of consumer credit in November 2016

falling out of the latest annual figure. Concerns have been raised that recent strong growth levels in consumer credit could suggest some households are at risk of over-stretching their borrowing.

In August, the annual growth rate in consumer credit was in double digits, at 10 per cent, before slowing to 9.8 per cent in September and 9.5 per cent in October, then 9.1 per cent in November.

Howard Archer, chief economic adviser for EY ITEM Club, said: "It remains to be seen just how much effect the Bank of England's interest rate hike at the start of November has in dampening impact on consumers' willingness to borrow."

"While the increase was just 25 basis points and interest rates are still at historically very low levels, there could well have been a significant psychological impact on potential borrowers given that it was the first interest rate hike since 2007."

"It does appear that lenders have been reining in the amount of unsecured credit available to consumers and tightening their lending standards."

He said increased concerns over personal finances may be encouraging some consumers to be more cautious in their borrowing.

Mr Archer added: "However, the persistent squeeze on consumer purchasing power is likely continuing to fuel the need for some consumers to borrow."

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ROOM TWO

You recently visited the Museum. When you got home you realised an artefact had fallen into your bag. You are desperate to return it before anyone realises. You have 1 hour before the guard returns from his rounds to solve the puzzles, return the scarab and get out of the museum.

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It's a super trouper of a sunny musical

It's the ultimate feel-good show. Mamma Mia has been described as being the world's sunniest and most exhilarating smash-hit musical. Written by Abba stars Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus the musical is set on a Greek island paradise.

It is a story of love, friendship and identity and is cleverly told through the timeless songs of Abba. The lead character is Sophie Sheridan, who is played by Lucy May Barker.

The action centres around her quest to discover the father she's never known. It follows her story as Sophie's mother comes face to face with three men from her distant romantic past on the eve of a wedding they'll never forget.

The show, which will run at Wolverhampton Grand from Wednesday until February 24, is irresistibly funny and has been thrilling audiences all around the world. Now it is coming to the city for the first time.

Lucy May is looking forward to that - and says she has a blast playing Sophie each evening.

"Being able to create my own version of it is amazing. I want to transport people away to our little Greek island world. That helps them forget what they've seen before."

"Sophie has been played by others but this is my interpretation. I have so much to do in the show because the story is so full. I just trust the fact that I was chosen for the part and I bring my own confidence to it. There's so much to do in this job," she says.

UPBEAT

The show is truly upbeat. The title of the musical was taken from the group's 1975 chart-topper Mamma Mia. Benny and Bjorn, who composed the original music for Abba, were involved in the development of the show from the beginning while singer Anni-Frid Lyngstad became involved financially and has attended many of the premieres around the world.

The musical includes such hits as Super Trouper, Lay All Your Love on Me, Dancing Queen, Knowing Me, Knowing You, Take a Chance on Me, Thank You for the Music, Money, Money, Money, The Winner Takes It All, Voulez-Vous, SOS and the title track. It has been seen by more than 60 million people around the world and a film version made in 2008 was a huge hit. That starred Meryl Streep, Colin Firth, Pierce Brosnan, Amanda Seyfried, Christine Baranski, Stellan Skarsgård and Julie Walters.

Lucy May says the show is so resolutely upbeat that it's impossible not to enjoy it. "I think it's hard for everyone not to have a great time. It's such a happy show and so if there's someone in the company who's down, it brings them straight up."

"People often come up with these amazing stories about how it makes them feel - the show is feel good."

Knowing me, knowing you - Mamma Mia is hit-packed fun



It's so upbeat. It gives the audience the chance to escape for a couple of hours. It is an absolute dream come true to play the role. I absolutely love the show and getting to perform it to all the lovely audience around the UK is a feeling like no other.

"I grew up listening to Abba and we had the Abba Gold CD in my mum's car, so I knew almost all the words already when I auditioned which was very handy ha ha! I love going on for Lay All Your Love."

"I love singing that number and from then on I don't leave the stage for the rest of the act which is a total rollercoaster."

The musical opened in the West End at the Prince Edward Theatre on April 6, 1999, and transferred to the Prince of Wales Theatre on June 9, 2004, where it played until September 2012. It has also featured on Broadway and at other cities around the world.

The present British tour has thrilled audiences the length and breadth of the UK and Lucy May says the responses have been remarkable.

"There was a review back at the start saying Mamma Mia should be available on the NHS. I've played it for the whole tour since 2016. With that

I want to transport people away to our little Greek island world

comes fantastic opportunities for learning and developing the role. I'd like to think I've got better. You practice something eight times a week and different audiences and different places give you different things. We were in Birmingham for 10 weeks and it was great and people are generally happy and cheery in the West Midlands: they're up for a good time.

"I've been to Wolverhampton before in other shows and the Grand is a beautiful theatre. There are some audiences that are slightly more serious in other parts of the UK, but Birmingham and Wolverhampton. But these are cities I love."

"To do big scale musicals that are uplifting and crowd-pleasing and positive is a gift."

"As a kid I did Annie and that really gave me the bug. Most of the people on stage or in the company had done it as kids, they'd done that in theatre school. So to go from doing that as a child to doing it as a professional in adult life is a dream. I try to always remember that. Not a lot of people have the opportunity to turn their childhood passion turning into their life passion - I'm one of the lucky ones."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Shropshire Star every Friday.



Chef John has a real taste for big show

A celebrity chef enjoyed his visit to Shrewsbury Flower Show so much last year, he has agreed to headline this year's event.

Masterchef host John Torode will be on stage at the 2018 show demonstrating just what makes him one of the nation's most favourite chefs.

His appearance at last year's show was a hit for all and his demonstrations in the cooking tent were one of the highlights of the two-day event.

The Australian-born chef has become a fixture on worldwide television thanks to the runaway success of the BBC cookery contest.

But the tables were turned at the flower

show with the judge becoming teacher and imparting his knowledge to crowds of eager fans.

Mr Torode, whose demonstrations were focused on how to cook a great steak, told crowds that to understand the key to good food is in its simplicity.

Helen Griffiths, marketing coordinator for Shropshire Horticultural Society, which organises the event said: "We are pleased to announce that John Torode will be making a welcomed return to the Shrewsbury Flower Show as our celebrity chef in 2018.

"His warmth and enthusiasm for cooking and his entertaining and informative demonstrations made him

an extremely popular part of last year's show and visitors flocked to the Food Hall to see him live.

"Tickets and membership are now available to purchase so if you or someone you know is a fan of Mr Torode's then order now, either online at www.shrewsburyflowershow.co.uk or by calling the office on 01743 235058."

The 2018 show is on August 10 and 11.

The show, which has just marked its 130th anniversary, attracts gardeners and chefs as well as thousands of the paying public. It is one of Shropshire's most popular and long running events and is the mainstay of the Shrewsbury social calendar.



Coming soon...

Have a laugh with Ed

Stand up comedian Ed Byrne will be performing in Mid Wales later this year.

He will be at Newtown's Hafren on May 16 at 8pm performing his show "Spoiler Alert".

He said: "I originally intended to call the show, 'I'll Millennial You in a Minute', but my promoter considered the title off-puttingly baffling.

"Is life that bad or have we good reason to complain about it?"

"Are we filled with righteous anger at a world gone wrong or are we all just a bunch of whiny little brats?"

"In short, are we spoiled?"

A theatre spokeswoman said: "Come and watch as Byrne takes this question, turns it upside down and shakes it until the funny falls out.

"Go on, spoil yourself.

"Recognised as one of the finest observational comics in the industry, Ed's television credits are countless.

"They include Mock The Week, Have I Got News For You, The Graham Norton Show, Live At The Apollo, The One Show, Comic Relief Bake Off 2015, The World's Most Dangerous Roads and, most recently, he and Dara O Briain filmed the follow up their Big Adventure show for BBC2 entitled Dara and Ed's Road to Mandalay."

Tickets for the show are £24 and are available by calling (01686) 614555.



Chance to take closer look at historic cockpits

A viation fans have a rare chance to get a closer look inside historic cockpits and vehicles at the RAF Museum in Cosford this month.

This year, the RAF Museum is offering visitors the chance to look inside 100 cockpits and vehicles from the collection across both its sites at Cosford and London.

There will be a series of eight events throughout 2018 to celebrate the RAF's centenary.

Visitors will be able to access more of the museum's historic aircraft and vehicle collection than ever before.

The first of four dates at Cosford will be held on February 9, themed around the unique test flight collection and a collection of Second World War, British, German and Japanese aircraft.

The test flight group of aircraft were built to test a new theory or line of research and many were produced in secrecy, often utilising components borrowed from other types.

These were the machines that helped Britain open new frontiers of flight.

Aircraft on the night include the British Aircraft Corporation Tactical Strike and Reconnaissance Mach 2 (TSR 2).

Other unique airframes open on the night include the SEPECAT Jaguar ACT Demonstrator, Fairey FD2, Saunders-Roe SR53, and the Hawker-Siddeley Kestrel FGA.

The event theme also extends to include a selection of the museum's unique collection of fighters and bombers.

The War in the Air collection at Cosford is home to the world's oldest Supermarine Spitfire 1 K9942, one of several aircraft open on the night for enthusiasts to enjoy a closer view.

Visitors can take a closer view of historic cockpits



In addition, the Messerschmitt BF109G, the backbone of the German Air Force's day fighter force will be open for a close view, along with the Lister Works Truck, used throughout RAF maintenance depots.

Visitors will also have an opportunity to step inside the Avro Lincoln B2, Yokosuka MXY7 Ohka, Kawasaki Ki-1001b and the Messerschmitt Me 163B-1a Komet during the February event.

The aircraft available at all eight events will vary, totalling 100 over the course of the year across the two RAF Museum sites.

There will only be 300 tickets available for each event and they are available to buy through the museum's website at www.rafmuseum.org/cosford

Tickets cost £13.50, which includes parking.

The event on February 9 takes place from 6pm to 9pm.

An insight into Darwin

A Darwin Memorial Lecture will be held in Shrewsbury later this month.

The lecture, called "I, The Geologist": Charles Darwin's First career, will be given at Theatre Severn by Professor Martin Rudwick.

Charles Darwin first became known in the scientific world as a promising young geologist.

This gave him the intellectual framework for much of his biological work.

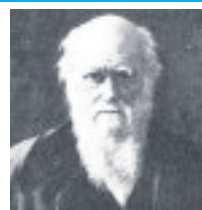
In this illustrated lecture Professor Rudwick describes what Darwin did in his first career, from his earliest geological training while based in Shrewsbury, through his fieldwork in South America and the coral islands of the Pacific, to his final fieldwork on the Parallel Roads in Scotland, which coincided with the creative biological thinking that later culminated in On the Origin of Species.

Professor Rudwick's own first career was as an evolutionary palaeontologist at Cambridge.

Later he switched to the history of this and related sciences, which he taught successfully at Cambridge, Amsterdam, Princeton and California.

He has an international reputation and has published several books, most recently – and for the general reader – Earth's Deep History.

The lecture will be on February 11 from 2.30pm to 3.30pm. Tickets cost £12.



Noel's city date

Noel Gallagher will return to Birmingham when his band headline the Arena on May 1.

The shows are part of a UK arena tour and follow the release of the third album from Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds, Who Built The Moon?

The former Oasis star is looking forward to a busy summer.

He has already been announced as the headline act at Warrington's Neighbourhood Weekender festival.

His band will headline the two-day Victoria Park event on Sunday, May 27 with tickets on sale now.

Who Built The Moon? is the keenly anticipated follow-up to the platinum-selling, Chasing Yesterday (2015).

While flowing from the same, molten core of melody, songwriting craft and towering self-belief, the album is poised between experimental and a jukebox of ageless influence.

It follows a bracing, two-year creative collaboration with renowned producer, DJ and composer, David Holmes.



* **HEALTHY** living is to come under the spotlight at a major showcase. Around 2,000 visitors and 100 exhibitors are expected at the Healthy Lifestyle Show at Telford's International Centre on March 25.

The event is the idea of Shropshire catering and events entrepreneur Sarah Lewis. "The Healthy Lifestyle Show is set to be the biggest event of its kind ever to be held in the North Midlands and will bring business opportunities and visitors to Telford," said Sarah. "Planning is well under way and we are in talks with dozens of traders who want to exhibit at the event." Newport-based Sarah is experienced at organising large outside events and festivals across the Midlands.

NOTICE BOARD

Her company has run executive catering and a vintage village at the Cosford Air Show and manages events at venues across Shropshire and Staffordshire.

"In terms of numbers, this is the biggest event Sarah Lewis Enterprises has staged," she said.

"Having organised smaller healthy living themed events, I realised there was an opportunity to bring together traders from across the Midlands for a large, one-day show. The Telford International Centre is an ideal venue with good road links and hotel space

for visitors and traders who plan to stay overnight. Our research shows that we can expect visitors not only from the local area but also Birmingham, the Potteries and North Wales." The event will run over five themed zones: Nutrition, Wellbeing, Health and Fitness, Speciality Food, Retail & Shopping. There will also be workshops, demonstrations and a cafe area. Tickets are now on sale and further details can be found at healthylifestyleshow.org.uk

*IN 2018 the well-loved Carducci celebrate their 21st anniversary.

As part of their nationwide Bartok 2018 project, in Shropshire the quartet will present chamber music jewels by Haydn, Brahms, Mendelssohn and Dvorak

alongside three of Hungarian Bela Bartok's influential quartet masterpieces.

They are again joined in the first programme by star clarinettist Julian Bliss at 3pm on Sunday, March 18 at the Lion Hotel, Shrewsbury.

Kate Hogwood, director of Shropshire Music Trust said: "Don't miss the Carducci's illuminating introductory talk at 2.15pm before the first concert called 'Bartok – a life through the string quartets'.

The concert will be a musical journey from the expressive late-romantic style used in Bartok's 1st quartet, to a late Viennese masterpiece of Haydn Op103, and Brahms' sublime autumnal clarinet quintet.

February 3



Casualty

8pm
Alicia takes matters into her own hands when the ED reaches capacity, placing patients' lives in danger, and eager new F1 Bea discovers the perils of rushing into resus work.



Live Davis Cup Tennis

1pm
Spain v Great Britain. Sue Barker presents coverage of the second day of the World Group first-round contest, which takes place at Puente Romano Sports Complex in Marbella, Spain.



Take Me Out

6.40pm
Paddy McGuinness welcomes another panel of 30 single women to appraise the merits of men seeking romance. This time, the Love Lift welcomes Harrison, Glenn, Jack, and Lloyd.



Great Canal Journeys

7pm
Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore the landscape of north-west Portugal on a voyage down the Rio Douro, following the route of the old port trade.



Football on 5: The Championship

9pm
Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Wolverhampton Wanderers v Sheffield United and Aston Villa v Burton Albion.

BBC1	
6.00	Breakfast.
10.00	Saturday Kitchen Live. Actress Sarah Hadland joins Matt Tebbutt in the studio to sample culinary treats prepared by Cyrus Todiwala and Theo Randall. The wines are selected by Sam Caporn.
11.30	Mary Berry Everyday. Mary shares ideas to make everyday family meals special with no-fuss dishes and also tries her hand at milking a goat before making her own cheese for a family picnic. (R)
12.00	Football Focus. Dan Walker and guests look ahead to the weekend's football, including Burnley v Manchester City and Arsenal v Everton in the Premier League.
1.00	BBC News; Weather.
1.15	Six Nations Preview. John Inverdale is joined by former international captains Martin Johnson, Andy Nicol and Chris Paterson to look ahead to this year's championship.
1.45	Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Wales v Scotland (Kick-off 2.15pm). John Inverdale presents coverage of the opening match of the championship, held at the Principality Stadium.
4.15	Live Six Nations Rugby Union. France v Ireland (Kick-off 4.45pm). Gabby Logan presents coverage of the match from the Stade de France in Paris, as the opening round of fixtures continues.
7.00	BBC News.
7.10	Midlands Today; Weather.
7.15	All Together Now. The musical talent show continues, as Rob Beckett invites more would-be singing superstars to encourage members of a 100-strong judging panel to sing along with them.
8.20	Casualty. Alicia takes matters into her own hands when the ED reaches capacity, placing patients' lives in danger, and eager new F1 Bea discovers the perils of rushing into resus work.
9.10	BBC News; Weather.
9.30	Hard Sun. The brutal murder of a night jogger has dire personal implications for both Renko and Daniel, and places Hicks at odds with a colleague he has come to respect.
10.30	Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Burnley v Manchester City, Manchester United v Huddersfield Town and Arsenal v Everton; National Lottery Update.
11.55	The NFL Show. Mark Chapman is joined by Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to look ahead to Super Bowl LII, which takes place at US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.
12.25	FILM: Ill Manors (2012). A chain of violent events has repercussions for various residents of a London council estate struggling to survive. Drama, with Riz Ahmed, Nick Sagar and Keith Coggins.
2.20	Weather for the Week Ahead.
2.25	BBC News.

BBC2	
6.10	The Wonder of Animals. Examining how ants have colonised the planet. (R)
6.40	Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. Naomi picks her ultimate nightmare from the series. Last in the series.
7.10	The Pets Factor. Cat Henstridge has her work cut out with a feisty feline.
7.30	Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch.
7.45	Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch.
8.00	The Dengineers. The team builds an adventure den for a nine-year-old boy with leukaemia.
8.30	Deadly Top 10. Counting down the fiercest animals. (R)
9.00	Robot Wars. Featuring one of the tallest robots to ever enter the arena. (R)
10.00	Robot Wars. Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present the final. Last in the series. (R)
11.00	Homes Under the Hammer. Properties in Folkestone, Stoke on Trent and Cumbria.
12.00	The Hairy Bikers' Mediterranean Adventure. The bikers ride across the Balearic islands Menorca and Majorca. (R)
1.00	Live Davis Cup Tennis. Spain v Great Britain.
3.30	Nigel Slater's Middle East. The writer embarks on a Middle Eastern food adventure. (R)
4.30	Final Score. A round-up of this afternoon's football results.
5.15	Flog It! From Muncaster Castle in Cumbria. (R)
6.00	Hugh's Wild West. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's West Country tour continues in the Somerset Levels, where he witnesses huge flocks of starlings swirling, and spots rare large blue butterflies.
7.00	A House Through Time. David Olusoga concludes the house's story, revealing how it was once almost demolished, then became a home for creative people and meeting the current owner. Last in the series. (R)
8.00	Dad's Army. Mainwaring is accused of leaving a light burning in the church hall during a blackout, and receives a summons to appear in court. Comedy, starring Arthur Lowe. (R)
8.30	Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs. Paul Murton embarks on a journey from Lairg on Loch Shin to Lochinver and finally, to the summit of Suilven - one of the most distinctive mountains in Scotland.
9.00	Qi XL. Jason Manford, Jimmy Carr and Victoria Coren Mitchell join Alan Davies and Sandi Toksvig for an extended edition of the unconventional quiz.
9.45	Live at the Apollo. Sara Pascoe presents stand-up comedy from London's Hammersmith Apollo, introducing sets by Larry Dean and Gary Delaney. (R)
10.30	FILM: The Talented Mr Ripley (1999). A man is paid to persuade a businessman's spoiled son to return home to his family, but ends up assuming his identity. Anthony Minghella's thriller, with Matt Damon and Jude Law.
12.40	FILM: Albatross (2011). Drama, starring Jessica Brown Findlay.
2.05	This Is BBC2.

ITV	
6.00	CITV: Sooty 6.10 Bottom Knocker Street 6.20 Bottom Knocker Street 6.35 Dino Dana 6.50 Super 4 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story 7.05 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister Six
7.30	Scrambled!: Scrambled! Two hours of children's fun.
7.35	Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
7.55	Scrambled!: Fangbone. Bill convinces Fangbone to stay inside all day. (R)
8.10	Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R)
8.30	Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! Adventures with the Scooby gang.
9.05	Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R)
9.25	ITV News.
9.30	James Martin's Saturday Morning. Kate Garraway and Lisa Allen join James in his kitchen, where he prepares chicken and chorizo flatbread, and a white chocolate and banana cheesecake.
11.20	Dancing on Ice. Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby present the skating challenge, with the 10 remaining contestants performing to avoid elimination. (R)
1.20	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
1.30	FILM: Evan Almighty (2007). God recruits a politician to build an ark and save the world's animals from an impending cataclysm. Comedy sequel to Bruce Almighty, starring Steve Carell and Morgan Freeman.
3.15	Catchphrase. Guessing game, hosted by Stephen Mulhern. (R)
4.00	Tipping Point. Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard. (R)
5.00	The Chase. Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
6.00	ITV News Central; Weather.
6.05	ITV News and Weather.
6.15	New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill introduces more viewer-submitted comedy clips, including a drone's destructive encounter with an errant baseball, and a photo-shy seal.
6.40	Take Me Out. Men from Leeds, Dublin, Edinburgh and Swansea seek the approval of the 30 single ladies sitting on Paddy McGuinness's panel.
8.00	The Voice UK. The Blind Auditions enter their fifth week, as Will.i.am, Jennifer Hudson, Olly Murs and Tom Jones assess the singing skills of more would-be stars.
9.30	Through the Keyhole. Keith Lemon infiltrates the homes of another three mystery celebrities, and challenges Shane Richie, Rachel Riley and Alex James to guess "who habitates in a house like this".
10.30	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.45	FILM: Lethal Weapon (1987). An unstable Vietnam veteran cop teams up with a by-the-book detective to smash a drug ring linked to a woman's apparent suicide. Action thriller, with Mel Gibson.
12.40	Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
3.00	Babushka. Game show in which contestants open a set of giant Russian nesting dolls, with some empty and others containing prizes up to £10,000. Rylan Clark-Neal hosts. (R)

Channel 4	
6.15	3rd Rock from the Sun. Dick is overcome by erotic fantasies. (R)
6.45	3rd Rock from the Sun. Dick discovers the stock market. (R)
7.10	The King of Queens. Doug and Ray play golf. (R)
7.35	The King of Queens. Arthur buys a headstone. (R)
8.00	Everybody Loves Raymond. Ray has to stay with his parents. (R)
8.25	Everybody Loves Raymond. Debra bans Frank from driving the kids anywhere. (R)
8.55	Frasier. Martin visits a retirement home. (R)
9.25	Frasier. Mel tries to embarrass Niles. (R)
9.55	Frasier. Niles pretends to be Mel's husband. (R)
10.25	The Big Bang Theory. Penny volunteers to nurse Sheldon. (R)
10.55	The Big Bang Theory. Sheldon feels threatened by a teenage prodigy. (R)
11.25	The Big Bang Theory. Leonard, Raj and Howard kick Sheldon off their quiz team. (R)
11.55	The Simpsons. Homer has a heart attack. (R)
12.25	The Simpsons. Bart and Lisa write a cartoon script. (R)
12.55	The Simpsons. Bart acquires a new father figure. (R)
1.25	Come Dine with Me. Four hopefuls compete in north London. (R)
2.25	Coast vs Country. Retired doctor Dilip and wife Jyotsna search for a family home in Hampshire. (R)
3.25	A Place in the Sun. A woman who wants to swap life in London for Spain's Costa Azahar. (R)
4.30	The Secret Life of the Zoo. After two years living alone, male onager Holmes is released into the female paddock. (R)
5.35	The Supervet. Noel Fitzpatrick helps a boxer dog that has injuries to its pelvis and hind legs. (R)
6.30	Channel 4 News.
7.00	Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore the landscape of north-west Portugal on a voyage down the Rio Douro, following the route of the old port trade. (R)
8.00	Village of the Year with Penelope Keith. Five villages from the show's Central Zone compete for a place in the final, as judges Alex Langlands, Patrick Grant and Juliet Sargeant assess their merits.
9.00	FILM: Suffragette (2015). Premiere. A woman joins a campaign to gain the right to vote in 1912, sacrificing everything for political change. Period drama, starring Carey Mulligan.
11.10	FILM: About Time (2013). A man learns he has the ability to travel through time and uses the power to improve his love life. Romantic fantasy comedy, with Domhnall Gleeson and Rachel McAdams.
1.20	The Last Leg. With guest Stephen Fry. (R)
2.15	Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Grace and Imran becomes increasingly irritated by his mother, following her choice to save Yasmine in the car accident. (R)
4.20	Coast vs Country. (R)
5.15	Location, Location, Location. House-hunting in Norfolk. (R)

Channel 5	
6.00	Milkshake!: Little Princess 6.15 Wanda and the Alien 6.25 Poppy Cat 6.35 Wissper 6.45 Milkshake! Monkey 6.50 Milkshake! Bopping About 6.55 Simon 7.00 Peppa Pig 7.05 Paw Patrol 7.20 Thomas & Friends 7.30 Fireman Sam 7.40 Olly the Little White Van 7.45 Blaze and the Monster Machines 8.20 Paw Patrol 8.35 Nella the Princess Knight 8.55 Noddy: Toyland Detective 9.05 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 9.20 Shimmer and Shine 9.40 Digby Dragon 9.55 Peppa Pig 10.00 Peppa Pig
10.05	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.
10.40	Funniest Fails, Falls & Flops. (R)
11.05	Police Interceptors. (R)
12.00	Police Interceptors. An officer deals with separate reports of shotgun and machete offences. (R)
1.00	The A-Team. A cab company is terrorised. (R)
2.00	The A-Team. The gang helps two harassed cabbage-pickers. (R)
3.00	Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. Tenants leave a landlord over £20,000 behind with his mortgage. (R)
4.00	Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. Catching up with tenants and landlords from previous episodes. (R)
5.00	Rich House, Poor House. A family who live in a rented house swap with the owners of a castle. (R)
5.55	5 News Weekend.
6.00	The Wonderful World of Puppies. The canine documentary explores how puppies use their key senses to absorb information about their new surroundings, and make a start on broadening their horizons.
7.00	Greatest Ever Celebrity Wind-Ups. Joe Pasquale showcases one last selection of pranks, with laughs coming at the expense of Justin Timberlake and Louis Walsh, among others. Last in the series.
8.00	Blind Date. A white witch from Preston seeks to cast her spell on three eligible bachelors, and former military man Dean from Wiltshire sets out to find his dream girl. Last in the series.
9.00	Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Wolverhampton Wanderers v Sheffield United, Aston Villa v Burton Albion and Leeds United v Cardiff City.
9.55	Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, including Bristol Rovers v Shrewsbury Town and Plymouth Argyle v Blackburn Rovers.
10.25	The X-Files. Mulder and Scully investigate a report of a killing during a full moon in a wood in Oregon, with eyewitness accounts pointing to the attacker being a bizarre lizard-human hybrid. (R)
11.15	The X-Files. Mulder and Scully are sent to investigate the unusual murder of a city official, while Scully also has to deal with a personal tragedy. Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny star. (R)
12.10	SuperCasino.
3.10	FILM: Vampire Academy (2014). Fantasy, starring Zoey Deutch.
4.45	House Doctor. (R)
5.10	Great Artists. (R)
5.35	House Busters. (R)

February 4



McMafia
 9pm
 Alex is forced to admit the truth as peace negotiations in Istanbul get underway between Semiyon and his enemies, but he does not realise he is about to suffer a further betrayal.



Dragons' Den
 9pm
 The panel assesses the profit-making potential of more business ideas, including a range of language-learning children's books and skin care products made out of hemp.



Dancing on Ice
 6pm
 Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby present the next stage as the contest reaches the halfway point, with nine celebrities still in the running to be this year's champion.



SAS: Who Dares Wins
 9pm
 The seven recruits who have made it to the final stage of the contest face the most gruelling challenge so far - which only one of them will complete. Last in the series.



The Punisher
 10.50pm
 An FBI agent becomes a vigilante and takes revenge on the powerful gangland kingpin who murdered his entire family. Comic-book thriller, starring Thomas Jane.

BBC1	
6.00	Breakfast.
7.35	Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Burnley v Manchester City, Manchester United v Huddersfield Town and Arsenal v Everton. (R)
9.00	The Andrew Marr Show.
10.00	The Big Questions. Nicky Campbell presents moral and religious discussions on topical issues from Oasis Academy in Lord's Hill, Southampton.
11.00	Sunday Politics West Midlands. The week's events at Westminster, presented by Sarah Smith. Including a regional round-up.
12.15	Bargain Hunt. From the Royal Cornwall Showground. (R)
1.00	BBC News; Weather.
1.15	The Truth About Getting Fit. Michael Mosley and a team of scientists investigate some of the easiest and most effective ways to get the biggest benefits of exercise. (R)
2.15	Wonders of the Moon. Using the latest and most detailed imagery, this documentary reveals the monthly life cycle of the moon as it waxes and wanes. (R)
3.15	Escape to the Country. Searching for a property in Wiltshire. (R)
3.45	Songs of Praise. A celebration of female Christian pioneers.
4.20	FILM: The Proposal (2009). A Canadian publishing editor trying to avoid deportation from America bribes her assistant into a marriage of convenience. Romantic comedy, with Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds. BBC News.
6.05	Midlands Today; Weather.
6.20	Countryfile. Reports on winter from around the country. Matt Baker meets a Dorset man championing local winter produce, and Anita Rani discovers the therapeutic benefit of making jewellery. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.
7.30	Still Open All Hours. Granville and Gastric come up with a romantic plan to persuade Madge and Mavis to stay. However, it involves spending a little more money than the shopkeeper is comfortable with.
8.00	Call the Midwife. Nurse Crane and Trixie investigate when a mother abandons her children at the clinic. When the woman is sent to a neurologist, the results are devastating for the whole family.
9.00	McMafia. Alex is forced to admit the truth as peace negotiations in Istanbul get underway between Semiyon and his enemies, but he does not realise he is about to suffer a further betrayal.
10.00	BBC News.
10.20	Midlands Today; Weather.
10.30	Match of the Day 2. Action from this afternoon's Premier League fixtures - Liverpool v Tottenham Hotspur.
11.15	American Football: Super Bowl LII. New England Patriots v Philadelphia Eagles (Kick-off 11.30pm). Mark Chapman presents coverage of the showpiece match, which takes place at US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.
3.50	Weather for the Week Ahead.
3.55	BBC News.

BBC2	
6.05	Coast. The team explores stories linked to sea cliffs around the UK. (R)
6.35	The NFL Show. A look ahead to the Super Bowl. (R)
7.05	Gardeners' World. (R)
7.35	Countryfile. Matt Baker visits a farm run by members of the British curling team. (R)
8.30	Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. Matt Tebbutt presents highlights of the series.
10.00	Live Davis Cup Tennis. Spain v Great Britain.
1.00	Money for Nothing. Sarah Moore transforms items reclaimed from a Walsall tip. (R)
1.30	Orson Welles: Talking Pictures. Profile of American actor and director Orson Welles. (R)
2.10	FILM: Jane Eyre (1943). Romantic period drama, starring Joan Fontaine and Orson Welles.
3.45	The Crane Gang. The day-to-day operations of a mobile crane company. (R)
4.45	Elise Christie: In from the Cold. The speed skater talks about the highs and lows of her career.
5.15	Ski Sunday. Jenny Jones talks to Katie Ormerod.
6.00	Six Nations Rugby Special. Italy v England. John Inverdale presents action from the concluding match of the opening round of fixtures, held at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome.
7.00	New York: America's Busiest City. Ade Adepitan, Anita Rani, Ant Anstead and Dan Snow take a closer look at one of the most powerful cities in the world, focusing on transport links in the first edition. (R)
8.00	Yellowstone: The Blazing Summer. Summer in Yellowstone brings a new challenge for the beavers as their river dries up, while the wolves have a surprising strategy to keep their pups fed. Last in the series. (R)
9.00	Dragons' Den. The panel assesses the profit-making potential of more business ideas, including a range of language-learning children's books and skin care products made out of hemp.
10.00	The Mash Report. Nish Kumar and a cast of comedy correspondents present the satirical and surreal take on the week's news. (R)
10.30	Insert Name Here. Miles Jupp, Kate Williams, Sally Phillips and Roisin Conaty join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer Sue Perkins' questions about famous people who share a name. (R)
11.00	Cleeverman. Boondee becomes the first public victim of the sinister "Process", Charlotte suspects there is something terribly wrong with her pregnancy, and Koen is reunited with an old friend.
11.55	Women's Six Nations Highlights. Lee McKenzie presents action from the opening round of fixtures - Wales v Scotland at Parc Eirias, France v Ireland at Stade Ernest Wallon and Italy v England at Stadio Mirabello.
12.25	FILM: Yves Saint Laurent (2014). Biopic of the fashion designer, starring Pierre Niney.
2.05	Sign Zone: Question Time. (R)
3.05	Sign Zone: Holby City. (R)
4.05	This Is BBC2.

ITV	
6.00	CITV: Sooty 6.10 Bottom Knocker Street 6.20 Bottom Knocker Street 6.35 Dino Dana 6.50 Super 4 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story 7.05 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs the Sinister Six
7.30	Scrambled!: Scrambled! Two hours of children's fun.
7.35	Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
7.55	Scrambled!: Ben 10. The youngster fights more colourful foes. (R)
8.10	Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. The hapless hero makes a new friend. (R)
8.30	Scrambled!: Spy School. GoldFist hatches a plan to interfere with London's waterways.
9.05	Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R)
9.25	ITV News.
9.30	River Monsters. A mystery sea monster washes up on a UK beach. (R)
10.00	Peston on Sunday. Political magazine.
11.00	The Martin Lewis Money Show. The benefits of different types of ISA. (R)
11.30	The Voice UK. The coaches conduct more Blind Auditions in the fifth week of the contest. (R)
1.00	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
1.10	Britain's Brightest Family. Two families compete for a place in the quarter-finals. (R)
1.40	The Cruise: Return to the Mediterranean. The large washing machine breaks down in the laundry. (R)
2.15	Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Italy v England (Kick-off 3.00pm).
5.30	ITV News Central; Weather.
5.40	ITV News and Weather.
6.00	Dancing on Ice. Phillip Schofield and Holly Willoughby present the next stage as the contest reaches the halfway point, with nine celebrities still in the running to be this year's champion.
8.00	Endeavour. New series. The detective investigates when a famous international thief tries to steal a Faberge egg from an auction - but the case leads to two gruesome murders.
10.00	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.15	Peston on Sunday. (R)
11.15	Next of Kin. Mona is released from custody and agrees to help the police in their attempts to bring in her nephew Danny, but her marriage comes under more strain than ever. (R)
12.15	Great Art. Documentary investigating some of the unanswered questions associated with Johannes Vermeer's 17th-century Dutch painting Girl with a Pearl Earring. Last in the series. (R)
1.05	Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
3.00	Take on the Twisters. Julia Bradbury presents the quiz show where contestants compete to take on eight giant sandtimers - and the more they keep in play, the more money they can win. (R)
3.50	ITV Nightscreen.
5.05	The Jeremy Kyle Show. The host invites guests to air their differences over family and relationship issues, and provides them with his own brand of no-nonsense advice. (R)

Channel 4	
6.10	Kirstie's Vintage Gems. Transforming a second-hand picture frame. (R)
6.15	The King of Queens. Doug embarrasses Carrie at her boss's party. (R)
6.40	The King of Queens. Doug goes clay pigeon shooting with Tim. (R)
7.05	Everybody Loves Raymond. Debra hires a babysitter. (R)
7.30	Everybody Loves Raymond. Ray embarrasses Debra at an auction. (R)
8.00	Frasier. The shrink starts dating a lawyer. (R)
8.30	Frasier. The new man in Roz's life befriends Frasier. (R)
9.00	Frasier. Dr Mary steals the limelight from Frasier. (R)
9.30	Sunday Brunch. With guests Ollie Locke, Rachel Parris, Angela Griffin and Alastair Campbell.
12.30	Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. Jamie Oliver and Jimmy Doherty are joined by veteran Star Wars actor Mark Hamill. (R)
1.35	The Simpsons. Mayor Quimby brings election day forward. (R)
2.05	The Simpsons. Homer reminisces about the time he was in a band. (R)
2.35	FILM: Never Kissed (1999). Romantic comedy, with Drew Barrymore and Michael Vartan.
4.40	FILM: Shark Tale (2004). Animated comedy, with the voice of Will Smith.
6.30	Channel 4 News.
7.00	Posh Pawn. James meets 1980s pop star Leelee John, who is hoping to sell some jewellery, and test drives an Austin A35 van.
8.00	The Biggest Little Railway in the World. The model train is only halfway through its journey to Inverness, but has to drive through bad weather and harsh terrain with the volunteers due to head home. Last in the series.
9.00	SAS: Who Dares Wins. The seven recruits who have made it to the final stage of the contest face the most gruelling challenge so far - which only one of them will complete. Last in the series.
10.00	Maltese: The Mafia Detective. New series. Italian crime drama following a Sicilian detective who is drawn into a struggle with the Mafia after he witnesses the murder of his best friend and his fiancée.
11.15	FILM: Elizabeth (1998). Elizabeth I's rise to the throne is threatened as enemies within the court and overseas plot to bring about her downfall. Historical drama, with Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush.
1.25	The World's Most Expensive Food. The network of luxury food suppliers who cater to Britain's billionaires, from a catering company that charges more than £1,000 per head to a farmer who massages his cattle. (R)
2.20	The Supervet. A Labrador that has become lame on both its front legs. (R)
3.15	Sarah Beeny's Four Rooms. A signed Winston Churchill book, a Lalique vase and an Elvis Presley tour banner. (R)
4.10	KOTV Boxing Weekly. Action from bouts featuring Conor Benn and Dereck Chisora.
4.40	Location, Location, Location. A family home in the Essex countryside on a £1million budget. (R)

Channel 5	
6.00	Milkshake!: Little Princess 6.15 Wanda and the Alien 6.25 Poppy Cat 6.35 Wissper 6.45 Milkshake! Monkey 6.50 Milkshake! Bopping About 6.55 Simon 7.00 Peppa Pig 7.05 Paw Patrol 7.20 Thomas & Friends 7.30 Fireman Sam 7.40 Olly the Little White Van
7.50	Blaze and the Monster Machines. Starla and Blaze go in search of a legendary racetrack. (R)
8.15	Milkshake!: Paw Patrol 8.30 Nella the Princess Knight 8.50 Noddy: Toyland Detective 9.00 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 9.15 Shimmer and Shine 9.35 Digby Dragon 9.50 Peppa Pig 9.55 Peppa Pig
10.00	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The gang faces a new enemy. (R)
10.35	Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games. (R)
11.30	Football on 5: Goal Rush. Goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two. (R)
12.00	Police Interceptors. Damo deploys a stinger in a bid to stop a drunk driver. (R)
12.55	Police Interceptors: Deadly Pursuits. A reckless car thief seems intent on causing carnage. (R)
1.55	FILM: Johnny English Reborn (2011). Spy comedy sequel, starring Rowan Atkinson.
3.55	5 News Weekend.
4.00	FILM: The Last Airbender (2010). Fantasy adventure, starring Noah Ringer.
5.00	5 News Update.
5.05	FILM: The Last Airbender (2010). Concluded.
6.00	FILM: Bulletproof Monk (2003). A mysterious Tibetan monk battles modern-day Nazis while training a thief to be his successor. Martial arts thriller, starring Chow Yun-Fat, Seann William Scott and Jaime King. Edited for violence.
8.00	FILM: Batman Begins (2005). A billionaire hones his fighting skills and becomes a masked vigilante to rid his city of crime and corruption. Comic-book adventure, starring Christian Bale and Liam Neeson.
9.00	5 News Update.
9.05	FILM: Batman Begins (2005). Concluded.
10.50	FILM: The Punisher (2004). An FBI agent becomes a vigilante and takes revenge on the powerful gangland kingpin who murdered his entire family. Comic-book thriller, starring Thomas Jane and John Travolta.
1.05	The X-Files. A gallery showing potentially offensive artwork is bombed, leading Mulder and Scully to seek a way to communicate with the comatose bomber in order to prevent a future attack. (R)
1.55	The X-Files. A mysterious pandemic sweeps across America. (R)
2.40	SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
4.00	Get Your Tatts Out: Kavos Ink. (R)
4.45	House Doctor. A Brixton flat. (R)
5.10	Great Artists. Greek artist El Greco. (R)
5.35	House Busters. Changes to the home that could improve lives. (R)

Reedbeds are essential to so much of our wildlife

AS the chilly and very damp winter continues, the promise of spring still seems some time off.

However as the temperatures begin to rise minutely, there will be movement. Long before the migrations of swallows and cuckoos, there will be an almost imperceptible movement of earth.

As the soil warms ever so slightly, it allows a new year's growth of verdant grasses and other vegetation to begin below the lacklustre sodden mat of brownish-green we currently have on our fields.

This revamping of the earth sees cattle and other livestock turned back out onto the land and species like hares beginning their springtime antics.

Obvious

But perhaps even less obvious is the growth not of grass but of reeds.

The extensive, golden reedbeds that are formed by stands of one plant, the common reed, are a familiar sight of wetlands across Shropshire.

From small farm ponds and ditches, to those in gardens and the larger water-courses of rivers, meres and lakes, reeds will, hopefully, never be far away.

Look into the depths from the end of the month onwards and you may just begin to see the odd murmur of new life beginning below the surface.

Over time, reedbeds naturally dry out as plant litter builds up, and are encroached by scrub and eventually woodland if they are left alone.

However, for many years they have been cut and managed to produce reeds for thatching buildings.

Continuing this form of management for

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thatch or for the sake of the wildlife that rely on them, keeps the habitat intact and ensures they are viable habitats and shelters for their inhabitants.

Reedbeds are among the most important habitats for birds in the UK.

They support many breeding birds including the nationally rare bittern, marsh harrier, Cetti's warblers and the bearded tit which lives exclusively in this habitat.

More commonly, reed and sedge warblers sing out from the stands and kingfishers flash past.

At this time of the year, reedbeds are used as roosting sites for several raptor species, while wildfowl like gadwall, tufted duck and shoveler feed in the shallows.

Many migratory species also arrive to feed and roost in our reedbeds.

Reedbeds are also good for invertebrates – iridescent damselflies like azure and common blues rest on the emergent vegetation, while nimble dragonflies, such as the four-spotted chaser and hairy dragonfly, hawk the area for insects. Five Red Data Book (a British list of endangered species) invertebrates are closely associated with reedbeds including the reed leopard moth and a rove beetle. Below the water's surface every species of fish in the UK rely on reedbeds either as protection or as a food or breeding source. Mammals also frequent these areas. Otters prey on amphibians like newts and frogs, and water voles feed on the banks of open waters. Noctule, Daubenton's, whiskered and pipistrelle bats can be



Amongst the Reeds, oil on board by Ben Waddams

seen feeding over reedbeds throughout the summer months. They really are a special habitat and the Shropshire Wildlife Trust is constantly preserving reedbeds around the county for the above reasons. Harbingers of spring may often come in more obvious

forms, but I for one will be looking forward to that first shoot of luxuriant green to poke its head out from the water and hail a new season.

Ben's artwork can be seen online at: ben-waddams.com

Health boss offers praise to A&E staff

THE man in charge of Shropshire's two main hospitals has praised his staff for their "incredible" efforts in coping over the Christmas and new year period.

Simon Wright, who is chief executive of Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, said the county's two A&E departments had seen more than 2,000 ambulances between December 22 and January 18 – with the figure expected to top 3,500 by the end of the month.

Mr Wright said that while A&E performance was not where he would like it to be, he could not be prouder of the efforts of his staff in dealing with the situation as demand surged over the festive period.

His comments come after it was revealed that four ambulances were diverted to Wolverhampton at one point over the holiday period.

Mr Wright said that while any patients going out of the county for treatment was regrettable, it was only ever done when demand was at its peak. Patients would only be sent to their nearest hospital outside the county, he added.

In the case of the four diverted ambulances, Mr Wright said the ambulances were directed to Wolverhampton for a one-hour period in the early hours.

"In many ways, having only four cases going outside the county during this period is a huge testament to the staff here," he said. "The teams in A&E have really done some remarkable work over an exceptionally busy period." Mr Wright said the plan to cope over the winter was the most detailed the trust had ever produced and he had also been able to secure additional funding to help cope.

While he said he was unhappy that fewer than 78 per cent of patients in A&E were dealt with within the government's four-hour target, the priority was to ensure that all patients are treated safely and effectively. Mr Wright said while he understood the focus on A&E performance, there was a danger that it could overshadow excellent work being done elsewhere. He said he was pleased SaTH continued to exceed the target of 85 per cent and the national average of 82.5 per cent for cancer care, at almost 89 per cent – which meant it was among the top 30 trusts in the country.

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Deadline for submission of applications for all positions is 18th February 2018

For further information please visit our website on www.nsc.ac.uk/jobs
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MOTORING

Civic wins in company car inaugural CCT100 Awards

By James Parker

The Honda Civic has been victorious in the Lower Medium category of Company Car Today's inaugural CCT100 Awards.

The inaugural Company Car Today CCT100 Awards spotlight the top company car choices and give fleets the best options for their business car operations.

Highlighting

The CCT100 Awards is a new event in the fleet calendar, and as the only product-focused awards in the industry, they provide the opportunity to inform fleets by highlighting the best new cars for their every need.

The CCT100 set out the 100 cars to suit any fleet requirement, anointing the best in class across 20 categories.

The award winners are decided from a shortlist of five, with the winners demonstrating strength across 12 characteristics important to company car operators and drivers, including emissions, running costs, price, performance and desirability.

The Honda Civic triumphed in a fiercely competitive group which included the Ford Focus, Hyundai Ioniq, Skoda Octavia and the VW Golf.

"Honda's Civic was one of the



The Honda Civic triumphed in a fiercely competitive group

most impressive new cars of last year, and manages to combine practicality, a great petrol engine, attractive pricing, low running costs, snappy design and an entertaining driving experience," said Company

Car Today Editor Paul Barker. "It's a car that took a big step on from a predecessor that was no bad car in itself, and the new Civic deserves the big success that should come its way."

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Head-turner Jaguar means business

By Graham Breeze

Fighting off the opposition in the constant battle for sales has never been a problem for Jaguar and there's little wonder the stunning XE R-Sport is selling so well.

Designers have been working hard to ensure the Midlands-based company produces cars to turn heads and the XE R-Sport 2.0 AWD tested is a prime example of the road being approached by Jaguar.

It's a car for the purist and the enthusiast with just a little something thrown in for the boy racer still living within lots of us. Quite frankly a pure joy.

I would have to say that I was a little spoiled by the test car though. You would expect to pay anything from £37,000 for this model but there were so many added extras that the price would rocket to £52,280 – and that would test the depth of quite a few pockets.

Discreet R-Sport badging, a body kit and gorgeous 19inch five split-spoke wheels make this XE a stand-out edition to the Jaguar range while the interior is a reminder of why Jaguar has been the brand of quality for so many years.

Armchair standard front seating quickly put the driver at ease and quality colour-themed leather and stitching along with heating add to the immediate upmarket feel.

An eye-catching touchscreen system dominates the fascia where you can control just about everything except the outside temperature.

And the good news is it appears to be idiot proof with everything about as straight forward as it gets these days.

Today's modern motorist now wants to plug in a multitude of equipment while on the move and they won't be disappointed in the XE with USB points and 12V sockets in just the right places.

Jaguar label the XE a five-seater but the middle rear seat is no place for those without a bit of extra padding, so it's really a four-seater with lots of boot space – which means plenty of room for the golf clubs and accessories.

Emissions

The two-litre turbocharged diesel engine produces a top speed of 140mph with 0-60mph restricted to 7.5 seconds by the all-wheel-drive system. But you can expect 60 miles for a gallon of diesel and carbon emissions of just 123g/km.

For your £37,000 you can expect eight-speed automatic transmission, automatic beam assist, cruise control and limiter, drive control, electric parking brake, brake pad wear indicator, stability and traction control, tyre pressure monitoring, tyre repair system, approach illumination, climate control, DAB radio, traffic sign recognition and emergency braking.

Living with the XE has never been easier thanks to a host of convenience enhancements.

A "gesture" boot lid makes it possible for customers to open the boot with a simple wave of the foot beneath the rear bumper, taking the stress out of loading and unloading luggage.

Amazingly the test car included over



Designers have been working hard to ensure the Midlands-based company produces cars to turn heads

£15,000 worth of extras. These included privacy glass, 19inch five split-spoke wheels with black finish, climate front and heated rear seats, a power convenience pack, mood lighting and cold climate pack.

There is also a Navigation Pro with Meridian

Surround System, my favourite head-up display, illuminated metal treadplates with Jaguar script, auto folding, dimming and heated door mirrors, advanced parking assist pack with surround cameras, 10-way electric front seats, electric tow-bar, WiFi

hot spot system and electric rear window sunblinds.

There's a lot of opposition in this class from the likes of Audi, BMW and Mercedes but you just get the feeling that this is a Jaguar that means business.

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	Heatings	17	
	Brooklands	17	
	Rock and Fun	17	
	Beeches	17	
	Admiral Dun B..	17	
	Woodman	17	
	Inn on Green ..	17	
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	Golden Lion A..	13	
	Rail B	13	
	Forest Inn	13	
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	RAFA A	13	
	Castle, Knuckas	13	
	Astrals	12	
	Ramblers	12	

Goal-crazy Welshpool rack up 11 to go clear

LEADERS Welshpool Town went goal crazy as they hammered struggling Machynlleth 11-0 to move six points clear at the top of the Spar Mid Wales League division one.

The encounter between the sides at the top and foot of the division turned out to be a one-sided affair, with Pool proving too hot to handle as top scorer Will Thomas and Adam Davies both scored four times in the rout.

Ricky Litchfield weighed in with a brace and Ed Baker got the other as Pool got back on track after some mixed results of late.

Despite being six points clear, the Maesydre side have played five more games than second placed Llanrhaeadr who were involved in Welsh Cup action against Bangor City.

Berriew were also in winning form in the only other game in division one, but had a far closer affair as they notched a welcome 2-1 success at home to Carno with Jack Weaver and Marc Jones (penalty).

After suffering their first league defeat of the season the week before, Llansantffraid Village got their promotion push back on track in division two with a 4-1 beating of Montgomery at Treflan.

Goals from Matthew Davies, Dan Hinkley, Callum Williams and Nathan Prodder took the second placed villagers to within two points of leaders Builth Wells who were without a league game.

A brace from Joel Evans helped steer Brecon Northcote to a comfortable 4-0 verdict at Talgarth, with Corey Evans and Craig Evans also netting with free kicks.

The weather again disrupted the fixture programme with the second division matches involving Penybont v Dolgellau and Newbridge against Presteigne both postponed.

Abermule, meanwhile, reached the semi-finals of the ER Jenkins Cup after staging a terrific fight-back to clinch a 5-4 extra time victory at home to holders Aberystwyth University.

ST MARTINS VILLAGE, flying high in the Shropshire County League division one, were held in check 3-3 at Albrighton. They remain five points clear at the top.

Gobowen Celtic were left on the sidelines in the premier division as their clash at basement rivals Craven Arms was postponed.

Parry makes the move to Llandudno

TNS midfielder Robbie Parry has joined Welsh Premier rivals Llandudno on loan - his second spell at Maesdu Park.

Parry spent the latter part of last season with Tudno and manager Iwan Williams was delighted to capture the 23-year-old.

"With us finishing in the bottom six we feel that we can be a bit more expansive going into the second phase and Robbie will give it that with the quality he possesses," he said.

Parry spent time at Wolverhampton Wanderers before becoming a member of the under-21 side at Stoke City.

Released by the Potters, he joined TNS in October 2015 and was loaned to Gap Connah's Quay a month later before being recalled in April 2016.

He has scored nine goals from 27 (+13) Welsh Premier appearances to date.

■ TNS under-19s saw their lead at the top of the Welsh Premier Development League (north) cut to seven points after their 1-1 draw at Flint Town United.

Second place Bangor City, who have played a game more, made up some ground with a 5-1 victory at Cefn Druids.

New signing Ebbe flows with a double

NEW boy Dean Ebbe proved an instant hit as The New Saints navigated a tricky hurdle to reach the quarter-finals of the JD Welsh Cup with a 3-1 victory at Caernarfon Town.

Irishman Dean Ebbe, making his first start, struck twice at the start of each half to keep the Welsh Premier leaders on course to regain a trophy they relinquished last season.

Darren Thomas pulled one back on 77 minutes to make for a tight finish, but Aeron Edwards wrapped up victory with a third goal in injury time.

TNS, six times winners of the prestigious competition, made the trip to north Wales in confident mood after lifting the Nathaniel MG Cup for a fourth consecutive season six days before.

A heavy and bobbly surface made the going tough in a game of few clear-cut chances, but the visitors dug deep to run out worthy winners against wholehearted opponents who themselves were on an 11-

match unbeaten run.

"It was tricky at times, the surface was heavy and not flat, everything which our 3G pitch at the Venue is not, but we adapted well," said TNS boss Scott Ruscoe.

"The main thing was to make sure we get through to the quarter-finals in what is an important cup for us, which we did.

"It was a bit edge of the seats at the end when they scored, but overall I felt we dealt well with the conditions and deserve to be through.

"It was good to see Dean score twice. As a forward you want to get goals as soon as possible. He's a goalscorer, is a lively and hungry player, and it's a great start for him."

The Saints were on their way after just four minutes as Jamie Mullan won the ball, broke into the box and, despite the winger's shot being saved by former Saints keeper Alex Ramsay, new signing

Ebbe pounced to dispatch the rebound.

Caernarfon's hopes of retrieving the game faded as former Shamrock Rovers man Ebbe doubled his tally three minutes into the second period when Aeron Edwards pounced on a mis-hit clearance from Gareth Edwards before feeding the tall striker to dink the ball over Ramsay.

Spirited Caernarfon gave themselves a lifeline 13 minutes from time when good work along the left by Brookwell and former Welshpool striker Breese set up Thomas who beat keeper Harrison from close range.

But TNS - whose new Estonian forward Kevin Kauber came on as a second half substitute - were not to be denied as they became the first side through to the last eight with a third goal a minute in injury time.

This time Ebbe turned provider in the box when finding Edwards who smashed the ball home.

Brave Villagers bow out of Welsh Cup

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

A BRACE from Bangor City debutant Joel Bembo-Leta snuffed off Llanrhaeadr's hopes of pulling off another JD Welsh Cup upset as the villagers bowed out in the fourth round at Tanllan.

Bembo-Leta scored once in each half as City navigated a potential banana skin to progress to the quarter-finals, with another newcomer Yves Zama notching their first.

But the Welsh Premier big guns had to dig deep in heavy conditions to repel their gutsy Spar Mid Wales League hosts who proved a handful in front of a sizeable crowd at the Recreation Ground.

They had led with an early penalty from Iwan Matthews, before the striker crossed for substitute Dan Graham to force in a second late on to set up a tight finish.

Both sides finished with 10 men in a gruelling affair, and City assistant manager Gary Taylor-Fletcher admitted his side were relieved to be in the last eight.

"The lads where superb today, especially on a difficult pitch," he said. "It was a great battle and we did what was needed."

Llanrhaeadr chairman Mel Roberts described the village side as "immense" despite falling just short in their efforts.

"The players gave everything, and Bangor knew they had been in a game," he said.

"It was a shame we did not get the result we wanted, but it was a proud day for everyone involved with the club, and for the village which came out to support in their numbers."

Having overcome another Welsh top flight side Cefn Druids in the previous round, Llanrhaeadr were bidding to reach the quarter-finals for the first time in their history.

Early lead

And they made the perfect start by taking an early lead when Marc Griffiths raced onto a through ball before being clipped by Connor Roberts as he rounded the keeper. Top scorer Matthews then stepped up to dispatch the resulting penalty on seven minutes.

That advantage lasted just five minutes as new signing Yves Zama headed home an inviting cross from the left to make an instant impression for the Citizens.

The Welsh Premier visitors were in front on 23 minutes as another debutant, Bembo-Leta, got on the end of a Laurence Wilson free kick to convert. Bembo-Leta then notched his second of the game six minutes into the second period to give eight times Welsh Cup winners Bangor some breathing space.

Llan had a couple of chances, with Tom Bailey firing over from six yards and Matthews putting his shot past the post after breaking through.

And their hopes of getting back into the game were given a boost on 68 minutes when the Citizens were reduced to 10 men following the dismissal of Laurence Wilson for his second booking for a tackle from behind.

Despite having a man advantage, the tie seemed to be petering out, but three minutes from time, the villagers gave themselves hope when Matthews crossed for Graham to tuck the ball into the net to set up a tight finish.

But City saw out the closing moments, while Llanrhaeadr themselves also finished with 10 men after Dan Kelly picked up his second booking in stoppage time for pulling back Sam Jones.

Olympians shine in Sportshall



The Oswestry Olympians team at Shropshire Sportshall League competition at Much Wenlock

AARON Warburton was the leading Oswestry Olympians athlete in the Sportshall competition held at Much Wenlock - winning both of his races by clear margins before nearly pulling back a deficit running the anchor leg in the relay.

The under-11 boys made a fantastic start to the third meeting of the season by winning all three of the running races.

Aaron showed his form by winning the two-lap hurdles and the three laps while Ollie Rogers maintained his impressive form for the club to win the two lap race.

Ollie then secured fourth in the balance test, while Freddie Heasmer-Jones and Harry Cartwright added to the points tally from the sitting throw.

In the most exciting relay of the day, outstanding third and fourth legs by Ollie Rogers and Aaron Warburton were not quite enough

to catch Bridgnorth leaving the Oswestry team third on the day.

The under-11 girls team finished third with Ellen Gray and Seren Roberts leading the way with second places in the two lap hurdles and two laps respectively. Lexie Youens (2 lap hurdles), Kate Hotchkiss (two laps), Jess Steel (three laps) and Jessica Parsons-Hann (three laps) all added points in the running events.

Bounces

Consistent performances from all five girls in the field events contributed to the team's third position.

Second places in the two laps A and B races from Luke Steel and Markus Tins and further points on the track from Massimo Wyatt, Tom Hotchkiss and Ben Rothera set the under-13 boys on the way to another team third.

Massimo confirmed his versatility by winning the speed

bounce just two bounces ahead of Ben Rothera.

This season's new members enabled the club to field a full under-13 girls' team with Molly Tinney, Tamzin Guntrip, Lucy Othen and Mia Wyatt taking their team to fifth on the day.

Despite having just two competitors in the under-15 girls events some determined performances from the talented and versatile Katie Othen and Anna Rothera took the team to fourth.

Another club member to show his versatility was Evan Roberts who officiated on behalf of the club in the girl's vertical jump before donning a club vest to claim a creditable fourth in the under-15 boys event.

With one more meeting to go, several of the club's age groups are in contention for overall medal positions. The date of this final event, which will be held in Oswestry, is yet to be confirmed.

Price is on the money as Saints smash six

ST MARTINS made it six of the best as they continued their revival in the West Midlands League division one with a 6-0 hammering of lowly Kington Town at Park Hall.

Brendon Price led the charge with a hat-trick, while Callum Graybrook weighed with a double and Tom Ash rounded off the scoring as the Saints made more ground on the leading pack with their fifth straight win in the league - and six in all competitions.

They remain eighth in the table, but are just three points off fourth position after closing the gap on several sides above. Their next league action is away to Tipton Town next Wednesday (February 8).

After being frustrated by the weather last weekend, Dan Stevens' side made the most of their return to action as they cantered to victory at Park Hall.

They never looked back after taking a second minute lead when Price tapped in the opener after Shawn Melusi had squared the ball from the right.

Graybrook then spurned a golden chance with the goal beckoning while Jamie Durman headed wide from Price's ball into the box following a quick corner as the hosts dominated.

The chances continued to flow with Price lifting a ball over the bar, before a second goal that threatened arrived on the half hour when Price ran onto a superb ball from Hands and steered his shot in off the post.

Price could have had a hat-trick in the first half, but was denied by a superb save from the Kington keeper as the Saints continued to press.

The second half continued in a similar vein, with Graybrook making it 3-0 on 54 minutes from the penalty spot after handball in the box, and Graybrook slotted in his second from a Dave Hartshorn cross eight minutes later.

Price soon completed his treble when heading in the rebound after Graybrook's effort had been saved, while the scoring was completed in the last minute as Ash ran onto a superb ball to round off an excellent afternoon's work.

Guils left to kick heels once again

WET weather again disrupted the Huws Gray Cymru Alliance with two key games postponed involving clubs from the region.

Guilsfield were left kicking their heels as their trip to Holyhead Hotspur in the already delayed first round of the Huws Gray Cup was called off with the Anglesey club's pitch unfit.

The two sides had played on the ground the week before in the league, with the Guils running out impressive 4-2 victors having trailed early on.

The pitch was left badly cut up from that game, and last Saturday's encounter was postponed following an early morning pitch inspection to spare the villagers from travelling.

It is the second time the game has been postponed, which means that the tie will now be switched to Guilsfield - likely to be played on Saturday, February 10. The winners will visit Porthmadog in the quarter-finals.

Caerswys' basement showdown at Penrhynoch was also postponed due to a waterlogged pitch at Cae Baker, adding to the Bluebirds' mounting fixture backlog.

Meanwhile, Guilsfield's trip to Llanidloes Town in the fourth round of the Central Wales Cup succumbed to a waterlogged pitch at Victoria Avenue. The match has been rearranged for this Tuesday.

Young Louie in the swim and ranked 15th in UK



Young swimmer Louie Leggett, who is ranked 15th in the UK

DEDICATION has paid off for Bellan House swimmer Louie Leggett who has risen to 15th in the UK rankings while also being in the top 10 swimmers in Shropshire and the West Midlands.

Ten-year-old Louie, who swims for Ellesmere Titans, is on an elite swimming programme, and is currently part of the age development squad after successful trials.

Swimming under trial and assessment conditions three times per week for three weeks took some adjustment, but his amazing technical ability and perseverance saw him shine across all four disciplines of freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly.

Having been offered a full time place on the programme, Louie now trains six times per week, showing remarkable dedication with 4.15am starts three mornings a week while travelling over an hour to the pool from home before going to school.

He also trains twice a week at Oswestry School's pool with swimming instructor Hannah Noble as he looks to further improve his technical development across all strokes.

Louie currently ranks in the top 10 for the county in most races, and is in the top 10 for the West Midlands region for the 1500m freestyle and 400 Individual Medley.

Then, after his very first competitive 1500m race (60 lengths) last November, he was then ranked 15th in the UK.

As he looks forward to becoming part of the Oswestry School school swimming team when he's old enough, Louie was crowned Powys county 2017 swimming champion for backstroke and won gold medal for his old school in Meifod.

Favouring distance races, he has set himself a target of qualifying for the regional championships in 400m freestyle, 1500m freestyle and 200 and 400 Individual Medley by next year - a terrific achievement for a boy who only finished his stage 7 badge 15 months ago.

Eagles still looking for elusive victory

RUGBY by John Bridgwater

OSWESTRY lost ground in the South Lancs and Cheshire Two after slipping to a 29-7 reverse at promotion chasing Liverpool Collegiate despite an 18th try of the season for Luca Owen-Youens.

Without a win since the turn of the year, the Eagles put in a battling display against the joint leaders on a heavy surface, but ultimately returned home empty handed.

It was their third defeat in 2018 which, as well as having another game postponed, has seen them slip below half way to 10th in the table.

There was little to separate the sides for the first quarter, though with the Liverpool side just about having the edge on pressure and possession.

The tackling was ferocious by both teams with a number of Liverpool players requiring treatment, while Nikola Nickolov and Iwan Ellis were outstanding in the visiting defence.

But the Oswestry line was breached midway through the half when the Merseysiders broke through following a line-out before forcing their way over for a converted touchdown.

The hosts kept up the pressure by kicking deep into the Oswestry half, putting the visiting forwards on the back foot, and their tactics eventually produced a penalty which they kicked for a 10-0 advantage.

Converted try

From the restart, Oswestry tried to make inroads into the Liverpool half with runs from Nick Clay, Nikola Nickolov and Finton Grogan, while Luca Owen-Youens kicked over the dead ball line following an attempted break.

From the drop out, Liverpool forced their way upfield and, from a scrum just outside the Oswestry 22 right on half time, the ball was fed to the speedy backs for a converted try under the posts.

Playing downhill in the second half, the Eagles looked to combat the home tactics and cut out the errors.

The heavy tackling continued to take its toll as Oswestry were met by some strong defending, while Liverpool themselves made some good ground courtesy of their accurate kicking which kept their opponents on the back foot.

After the visitors lost Hugh Adams following another knock to his head, Liverpool were awarded a scrum 10 yards out from the line. The ball came out quickly and the speed of passing proved too fast as the hosts carved a gap to run over for a third try, with the conversion missed.

Oswestry kept pushing Liverpool hard to try and get something out of the match, but paid the price for conceding a penalty as the hosts worked their way upfield, before crossing from a line-out for their fourth try to seal a bonus point. The conversion was added for a 29-0 lead.

Undaunted, the visitors continued to battle hard and press, and gained some consolation for their efforts when Iwan Ellis broke from halfway after picking up a loose kick from the hosts.



Coming through – Oswestry's Nikola Nickolov on the attack against Liverpool

Tudor Jones continued the progress before passing to Grogan who released Owen-Youens to storm over the try line for his 18th try of the season, Grogan adding the conversion.

For the remaining seven minutes, the Eagles piled the pressure on Liverpool but could not break the Merseysiders' defence which held firm to prevent any further scores.

Despite the defeat, there were excellent performances by a number of players, but the man-of-the-

match was given to Iwan Ellis for a great performance in both attack and defence.

Liverpool stay second in the table with the same points as the league leaders, while Oswestry drop to down 10th place and are keen to return to winning ways at home to strugglers Oldershaw on Saturday (2.15).

■ The club's second team, lying mid-table in the North West League division four (south), went down 20-3 at home to Shropshire rivals Whitchurch III.

COBRA promotion hopes are dented

RUGBY by John Bridgwater

ment flanker Aled Humphreys after good phases of play, with Worthington adding one conversion.

Bangor reduced the arrears with a penalty after the interval, but the visitors then crossed for a third try through replacement No8 Jack Jukes who was making his comeback after injury.

However, hopes of coming away with a victory faded as Bangor scored two converted scores to get themselves in front and, despite some late pressure, there was no way back for the visitors.

After back-to-back wins, WELSHPOOL's upturn in fortunes in division two (north) was stopped in its tracks with a hefty 55-5 loss at promotion hopefuls Wrexham on Saturday.

Pool were unable to capitalise on the conditions in their favour in the first half, and found themselves exposed by the home side's lively backs.

The visitors did manage a try before half time, when wing Jack Morris broke through a couple of tackles after a quick throw, but that was as good as it got as Wrexham took charge of the second period.

Pool were not helped by the stand-in referee who, after taking charge when the original official was held up in traffic, handed out two yellow cards to Joe Stranks which led to the captain's dismissal in

the second half.

The league now takes a two-week for the Six Nations, with COBRA's next action at home to Powys rivals Newtown on Saturday, February 17. Welshpool welcome Bangor on the same day, although they do have a regional Cup game at Newtown on Thursday night.

Newtown will be looking to bounce back after being hammered 64-0 at home to runaway leaders Denbigh.

Elsewhere, Llanidloes made a disappointing return to the pitch with a 45-7 loss at promotion chasing Shotton Steel to remain in the lower half of the Welsh League division two (north).

Having suffered a couple of blank weekends, Llani were desperate to get some action, but they ended up well beaten by their slick hosts who consolidated second spot.

The visitors, who made the trip with just 15 players, proved a match for second placed Shotton up front, but the home side took their chances with more options at their disposal.

Wing James Davies scored their one try, with Adam Price providing the conversion.

It was a better day for COBRA's young guns who kept their flag flying in the North Wales Youth Plate with a 45-15 passage at Bangor.

Ellesmere decide to go with joint bosses

ELLESMERE Rangers have appointed Jamie Haynes and Kevin Sandwith as joint managers of the West Midlands Premier side.

The duo take over following the departure of Richard Brown, and arrive with 'excellent coaching experience and qualifications', according to Rangers.

A club statement said: 'Jamie is an experienced player having started as a professional at Shrewsbury Town and has played for Newtown and Caersws in the Welsh Premier league as well as several clubs in the English non-league scene – Market Drayton Town, Leek Town, Newcastle Town and Redditch.

Experience

"Kevin has significant Football League experience at Carlisle United, Doncaster Rovers, Lincoln City, Chester City, Oxford United, Macclesfield Town and Mansfield Town as well as non-league at Telford United and Weymouth.

"Both come with excellent coaching experience and qualifications.

"The committee were impressed with their passion to develop and improve players, their vision to take the club forward, encouraging any local players to join or return to the club plus their plans to integrate the youth team into the first team set-up.

"They will take charge immediately with their first game on Saturday at home to Shifnal Town."

Four Crosses hit high five on the road

FOUR Crosses are leading the way at the top of the Montgomeryshire League division one courtesy of their 5-1 victory away to Llanfyllin Town.

With results going in their favour, the Foxen Manor men now head the table by two points from second placed Guilsfield Reserves who finished 2-2 at fellow challengers Bishop's Castle in the big game of the day.

Jamie Evans scored twice for Four Crosses, Ben Simms also found the net, while there were first goals for the club for Sean Griffiths and Steve Pugh.

Montgomeryshire League results
Division one: Bishop's Castle 2 Guilsfield Res 2, Llanfyllin Town 1 Four Crosses 5, Maesyrhandir 3 Trevern 3, Meifod v Llanymynech (postponed).
Division two: Carno Res v Abernethy Res (postponed), Newtown Wanderers 0 Fforden United 2, Trefonen 4 Churchstoke Res 2.

Pool's Ladies seek first win

WELSHPOOL Ladies continue to prop up the North Wales Women's Hockey League division one following their 3-1 reverse at Pwllheli Ladies.

It's been a tough campaign for Pool who, with seven defeats and three draws from their 10 games, will be chasing a first win at home to Powys rivals Llanfair Ladies on Saturday.

Llanfair, who also went down 3-1 last weekend at Colwyn Bay Ladies, lie just a couple of places above Pool.

Oswestry Ladies, who languish second bottom in the Cheshire Women's Hockey League division two, face a big game at home to basement rivals Runcorn Ladies on Saturday.

The visitors hover one place and three points above Oswestry who have lost 11 of their 15 outings this term, with three wins and one draw.

Roman stars in U19s win

ALL-ROUNDER Roman Walker, who featured for Oswestry last summer, made a memorable debut for England under-19s who hit their highest score against Canada in the under-19 World Cup in New Zealand.

England racked up 383-7 in their 50 overs, and went on to win by a mammoth 282 runs after dismissing the Canadians for 101, with Walker - who is on Glamorgan's books - removing both openers in taking 2-25.

However, after progressing through the group stages, England then lost by 31 runs against old rivals Australia in the quarter-finals.

Sport

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Young Olympians
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have off-day – P39



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Town swoop for Barbados international

FOUR new recruits have arrived to bolster FC Oswestry Town who will be looking to maintain their revival in the Hallmark North West Counties League division one in the second half of the season.

Seasoned defender Matty Woodward has joined the Park Hall men from Flint Town United, along with striker Ryan Jones from Ellesmere Rangers.

Tom Rowlands, 32, has also returned following a spell with Rhyl while Barbadian international left-back Louis Moss has also signed from Runcorn Town.

With Jacob Farleigh also back with the club on loan from TNS, it has put the Oswestry side in good shape for the second half of the campaign in which they still have 16 league games to play as well as being involved in two cup competitions.

"These are the right type of signings we want to bring in, and if we had this squad at the start of the season, then we would have been pushing for promotion," said manager Ryan Butcher.

Woodward, 34, has vast experience in the Welsh Premier with the likes of Bangor City, Airbus UK and Rhyl, and Butcher added: "Matty is a player that I have been after for some time. He brings a wealth of experience to the squad and a signing that shows the intent of the club moving forward."

Striker Ryan Jones, who is on his way back from a knee operation, recently impressed against Town when playing for Ellesmere Rangers, in the TJ Vickers Shropshire Cup.

Attacking midfielder Rowlands - who himself also has vast experience in the Welsh Premier - was a key figure with Town at the end of last season.

Town were again sidelined last weekend as their clash at Cumbrian side Holker Old Boys was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch. The match has been rearranged for Saturday, February 24.

Next up are back-to-back games against rock bottom Nelson, the first at home on Saturday followed by a trip to Lancashire the following week.

Still more to come from six-shooters

BOSS Dan Stevens feels there's still more to come from his St Martins side despite maintaining their revival in the West Midlands League division one with a 6-0 rout of Kington Town at Park Hall.

Victory, their eighth in nine outings, kept the Saints in sight of a top five finish as they chase promotion to the Hallmark North West Counties League next season.

"Performance wise we were not great, although we were always in control," said Stevens. "We showed good intensity in parts, but not all the time, and it's something we need to improve on when we come up against the better teams."

"But it's a sign of the progress the club is making when you are still disappointed after a 6-0 win."

Guils looking to spark against Flint

GUILSFIELD look to keep up the pressure on the Huws Gray Cymru Alliance pacesetters as they gear up for Saturday's tricky home encounter with Flint Town United at Clos Mytton (2.30).

Without a game last weekend, the Guils have slipped one position to third, two points off second placed Holywell Town, and six adrift of leaders Caernarfon Town.

They are still in good shape to challenge, underlining their credentials with excellent wins against Airbus UK and Holyhead Hotspur in recent weeks.

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

cent weeks.

Flint, however, could prove tough customers after pushing Newtown all the way in the Welsh Cup last weekend before bowing out on penalties.

Forward Adam Jenkins is set to return for the Guils following his three match ban - provided his side's midweek Central Wales Cup tie at Llanidloes Town went ahead. New signing Jack Harris

from FC Oswestry Town is still waiting for international clearance.

Guilsfield were left kicking their heels as their trip to Holyhead Hotspur in the first round of the Huws Gray Cup was again called off with the Anglesey club's pitch unfit.

It is the second time the game has been postponed, which means that the tie will now be switched to Guilsfield - likely to be played on Saturday, February 10. The winners will visit Porthmadog in the quarter-finals.

TNS HIT ROAD FOR CUP TEST

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

SIX-TIME winners The New Saints have been handed a testing trip to familiar foes Connah's Quay Nomads in the JD Welsh Cup quarter-final.

After overcoming Caernarfon Town 3-1 in the last 16, the Saints - last season's beaten finalists - will again hit the road for the pick of the fifth round ties on the first weekend of March.

The sides currently occupy the top two slots in the Welsh Premier, and Scott Ruscoe's men will be under no illusions they will have their work cut out at one of their least favoured haunts.

The sides have already met twice at the Dee-side Stadium this season, sharing a 2-2 draw in the league, before the Saints edged a 1-0 victory in the semi-final of the Nathaniel MG Cup.

The old adversaries will also come face to face a week before the cup showdown when their paths cross in the league on Saturday, February 24.

Newtown are also on the road to Llandudno, while minnows Penydarwen BGC face a daunting away trip to Bangor City - 3-2 conquerors of brave Llanrhaeadr last weekend.

Carmarthen Town are home to Aberystwyth in the other quarter final tie - all of which will be played over the first weekend of March.

While TNS toppled Caernarfon 3-1 thanks to a brace from new striker Dean Ebbe, the Nomads accounted for another Cymru Alliance side, Porthmadog, by the same margin with ex-Saints marksman Mike Wilde one of the scorers.

Meanwhile, the Saints look to carry on from where they left off when they launch the second phase of the JD Welsh Premier campaign with Friday night's trip to Cefn Druids (7.45).

The defending champions are well placed to lift the title for a record breaking seventh consecutive season as they embark on the Championship Conference involving the league's top six sides.

With just 10 games remaining, they stand a commanding 12 points clear at the top - and boss Scott Ruscoe will be looking for the high fliers to maintain their relentless charge at the top.

Eagles looking to fly again



Owestry's Luca Owen-Youens is tackled at Liverpool. Picture: John Gibbs.

AFTER going through January without a win, Oswestry's rugby players will be hoping a new month will bring a change of fortune when they host lowly Oldershaw at Granville Park on Saturday (2.15).

Last week's hard-fought 29-7 reverse at promotion chasing Liverpool Collegiate - their third defeat in 2018 - saw the Eagles slip to 10th in the South Lancs and Cheshire Two.

So they will be keen to get back on track this

weekend against their visitors from Wallasey who are second bottom in the table.

COBRA, whose promotion hopes in the Welsh League division two (north) suffered a setback with a 27-20 reverse at Bangor, have no action for two weeks.

WELSHPOOL, who themselves suffered a heavy defeat at Wrexham last weekend in the same division, also take a break from league action.

Cup heroes are back on league duty

AFTER their Welsh Cup adventure came to an end, Llanrhaeadr now turn their thoughts to the Spar Mid Wales League division one title race.

Lying second in the table with games in hand, the villagers face a crunch encounter away to promotion rivals Llanidloes Town on Saturday, with their hosts lying just one place below.

Llan will be looking for the type of performance that pushed Bangor City all the way before bowing out of the Welsh Cup with a 3-2 fourth round exit at Tanllan.

"The players were immense, and made the club proud," said chairman Mel Roberts.

"Bangor knew they had been in a game, and it was a fantastic day for everyone involved with the club, and also for the village which came out to support in their numbers."

"The day will live long in the memory, but it's back to the league now, and hopefully we can use this as a springboard."

Llan proved more than a match for their Welsh Premier visitors, scoring at the start and end of the match through a penalty from Iwan Matthews and Dan Graham, himself a Bangor fan.

WELSHPOOL who opened up a six point lead at the top after their 11-0 thrashing of lowly Machynlleth, bid to maintain the impetus away to Llandrinod Wells.

Berriew, buoyed by their 2-1 win against Carno, face a tricky home tussle with Aberaron, while Llanfair United welcome Radnor Valley as they look to make up ground on the leading pack.

Churchstoke entertain Borth United, while Kerry are also at home against Knighton Town as they bid to bounce back from their Central Wales Cup exit at Llanfair United.

Davis gets call for Commonwealths

MARATHON man Andy Davies has been named in the Wales team that will be heading for the Commonwealth Games in Australia in April.

The Forden runner made the qualifying mark during 2017 - and the 38-year-old is relishing his second Games after competing at Glasgow four years ago.

"There's a lot of training still to be done, but I'm really looking forward to all the preparations," he said.

Last year, Davies recorded a personal best marathon time of 2hr 15.11 secs when finishing a superb 16th at the London Marathon.

Meanwhile, local bowlers Hazel Wilson and Kathy Pearce will also be flying the flag at the Games after being confirmed respective team manager and women's coach of the Wales Bowls team that also includes Berriew's Catherine Taylor.

Wales has named a 93-strong squad for the Games Down Under which takes place on the Gold Coast from April 4-15.

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